Sandwell
CHRONICLE

Thursday, June 22, 2017 | Read by more than 64,000 people | Price when sold 70p

MASSIVE TOTAL RAISED BY CELEBRITY MATCH FOR CHARITIES

Michael Gough from Tile Choice, Charlotte Lilley from Compton Hospice, Wayne Thomas from Walsall FC, and Suzy Evans and son Owen Richards from Smile For Joel

MORE than £47,000 was raised through a celebrity football match in aid of a charity set up in memory of a family killed in the Tunisia terror attack, and a hospice.

The star-studded contest at Walsall's Banks's Stadium last month saw a host of high-profile names take to the pitch with glamour model Katie Price and X Factor winner Shayne Ward leading out the two sides. Other celebs included EastEnders actors Jake Wood and Dean Gaffney.

Calum Best and former Wolves player Jamie O'Hara were also in the line-ups.

The event raised money for Smile for Joel and Compton Hospice. The Smile for Joel charity, which helps families of people killed in homicides, was set up in memory of Joel Richards, aged 19, from Wednesbury, who was killed alongside his uncle Adrian Evans, from Bilston, grandfather Patrick Evans, from Wednesbury, and 35 others in Sousse in 2015.

A total of £47,226 was raised from the match. Joel's mother Suzy Richards said on the day: "The support has been fantastic since day one. The ripples of what happened have affected so many people. I just cannot thank everyone enough. Everyday for us is still hard as you can imagine. But we have to try and get through it the best we can. We went from a family of six to a family of three just by going on holiday."

After the final total was announced Sue Chance, head of fundraising at Compton Hospice said: "Thank you to everybody who turned out to support this celebrity football match. All of the celebrities taking part gave their time for free to raise funds for Compton and Smile for Joel, who we were honoured to team up with for such a fantastic event.

"We are delighted the match has raised £23,613 for each charity which will go a long way to supporting patients and their families living with the effects of life limiting illnesses."

Wayne Thomas, commercial manager at Walsall Football Club added: "We at Walsall Football Club were delighted to play a small part as the host venue It was a truly memorable day."

Owners told to keep pets on leads after wildlife tragedy

DOG ALERT AFTER SWAN IS MAULED

DOG walkers are being urged to keep their pets on leads near a pool at a West Bromwich park after a swan was killed in a shocking attack.

Signs have gone up after the bird was mauled by a dog at Dartmouth Park and owners have been warned they will be fined if they ignore orders to put dogs on leads.

The RSPCA was called to attend to the swan which suffered serious injuries to its wing and did not survive. The attack has prompted council bosses to act.

Dartmouth Park, which joins onto Sandwell Valley Country Park, is hugely popular with dog walkers. As well as extra signage, council chiefs said wardens would be carrying out extra patrols to ensure the park's wildlife is safe.

Ian Carroll, who is part of action group Swanwatch, said the bird had been part of a breeding pair in the park for 11 years.

Report by Richard Guttridge

Action

Sandwell Council's leisure boss Councillor Richard Marshall said: "We are aware of an incident that happened at Dartmouth Park. Following this, we have put up signs around the pool asking dog walkers to keep their pets on a lead when in that area.

"Our wardens are also carrying out more patrols around the park and talking to dog owners to make them aware of the situation. It is important for dog walkers to ensure they are responsible for their pets when they are off the lead and that they should put them on leads if instructed by wardens or be subject to fines if they do not comply."

The RSPCA has echoed the advice of the council following the attack on June 7.

RSPCA Midlands spokeswoman Rachel Butler said: "It would have been very distressing for people to witness this attack, and the message here is clear – please keep your dog under control when you know you are near wildlife. Remember that a wild animal may be nearby, but not instantly obvious, so make sure you keep a watch out."

Mr Carroll said: "I am disgusted by this latest dog attack, a problem which is getting worse. There need to be more stringent dog control orders in this park and borough-wide.

"Dog owners must control their pets and realise that birds graze on the grass for food."

Slim chance for bags of charity help

Slimming World consultant Loretta Garratt, with some of the 752 bags of donated clothes

KIND-HEARTED slimmers in Sandwell raised £19,000 for charity after donating more than 700 bags of old clothes. The Slimming World groups in the borough collected 752 bags of clothes, shoes and accessories from members who had slimmed out of their old wardrobes.

Each bag is worth around £25 to the charity. It comes as part of The Big Slimming World Clothes Throw in support of Cancer Research UK.

Consultant Jodie Griffiths, who runs the groups in West Bromwich and Great Bridge, said: "The members never fail to amaze me with their weight loss results and it has been great to see so many bags of clothes donated through The Big Slimming World Clothes Throw.

"This year's Clothes Throw has been a fantastic success. Our group is always buzzing and when we collected the bags up and saw what a phenomenal amount there were altogether, and we realised what a difference we could make, the atmosphere was just electric."

Last year, slimmers across the UK raised £2.1 million through donations to the initiative and this year it's hoped the event will smash that target and raise £3m for Cancer Research UK.

EDUCATION

Academy earns top marks again

AN academy school has been rated 'Outstanding' for the third time running.

Sandwell Academy, in West Bromwich, is one of the best performing in the Black Country, and has maintained its high standards, securing a hat-trick of 'Outstanding' ratings from Ofsted.

The academy, located next to The Hawthorns on Halfords Lane, first achieved the coveted status in 2011 and has since come through another two inspections with flying colours.

Leadership was described as'assured, confident and responsive' and 'absolutely no complacency'.

Teachers were also praised for allowing students to enter GCSE exams early and said the academy 'prioritised pupils' individual success and achievement over whole school league tables'.

Headteacher Simon Topper said: "I am incredibly proud of the achievements of students' at Sandwell Academy and delighted that everyone's hard work and efforts have been recognised in such a positive report once again."

DEVELOPMENT

Housing hope as troubled bar sold

A TROUBLED bar which was shut down by police has been sold, raising hopes it could be redeveloped.

The Triple S bar, formerly The Talbot, in Tipton, is in new hands having stood empty for almost two years.

The Triple S bar

Plans to turn it into flats had been in the pipeline prior to its sale.

Police took action following a string of violent incidents at the venue, including an attack which put a young man in a coma.

Following a period of uncertainty, it has now been confirmed that the Bradleys Lane venue has been sold.

Details of the buyer and sale price have not been revealed. Triple S had been due to be offered at an auction earlier this year for £110,000.

An application to convert the building into three flats was lodged last year but later withdrawn. It is believed plans for housing could soon be resurrected.

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TOM'S TRIBUTE TO TRAGIC JO

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New chapter as library staff kick off

BC Milan players, Daniel Cobbold, Dulcie Nock and volunteer Ben Sabin

STAFF and volunteers from a library have put together a five-a-side football team – called BC Milan.

Now they are looking for community-based teams from across the Black Country. People are needed to play in a series of special friendly matches as part of this year's Black Country Festival coming up in July.

BC Milan, a name library manager Robert Hazel cleverly thought of after taking inspiration from Italian greats AC Milan, will comprise staff, volunteers and friends of Tipton Library.

The youngest player is 18 and the oldest player in the team is in his 50s. Mr Hazel said the idea was to give the community a boost and help celebrate the Black Country area. He added: "The library played a community match as part of its carnival in 2015.

Although we lost we had such a laugh and decided we must do it again.

"Playing five-a-side football is really good for team building and will be great for the community. It's all about just having a bit of fun and it's what the Black Country festival is all about. We're looking to get a community-based team from Dudley, Wolverhampton and Walsall that can play short matches all in one morning. It's about getting the authorities working together." He added: "If it all works out well, hopefully we can do an even bigger tournament next year."

Anyone interested in joining the tournament should contact Robert at the library on 0121 557 1796 or email bertieprettyth ing@yahoo.co.uk.

The team will make their debut in a friendly game against a Tipton community team. It will be held on Saturday, July 15, at 1.30pm at the home of Tipton Town FC, Tipton Sports Academy.

Leader in pledge on flats' safety after fire

CHECKS on newly refurbished high-rise flats have been carried out to meet fire safety regulations, residents were this week assured.

Several tower blocks have been renovated in Sandwell over the last few years, including the addition of new cladding to improve insulation.

The devastating fire in London, which left at least 17 dead, and how quickly the flames spread, has led to questions about the safety of external cladding.

Sandwell Council leader Steve Eling said material used in the borough was non-flammable. He also said it was too soon to say whether a proposed refurbishment of tower blocks in Oldbury would be reviewed in light of the tragedy.

There are 55 tower blocks in Sandwell, with extensive work carried out at Beaconview, Broome, Stanton and Sheapecoate and Kynaston Houses in West Bromwich in recent years.

Planning documents submitted ahead of the work on the blocks showed they were fitted with 'high density laminate boards on aluminium rails' with 'a mineral fibre insulation backing'.

Recommendations

Councillor Eling said the flats were fitted with insulation which should not burn.

He said the council would go along with any recommendations from fire chiefs to review safety at tower blocks but that he was confident they did not present a risk.

He said: "The cladding done in Sandwell is Rockwool and that does not burn. We can give people assurance in Sandwell where buildings are fitted with Rockwool. There is not a polyurethane insulation used in Sandwell. We will work in co-operation with West Midlands Fire Service and any recommendations they provide. If implications for other local authorities arise from the fire clearly we would assess any recommendations that come out of that.

"The integrity of our buildings in relation to fire is about as good as it can be."

A £10 million refurbishment programme on a group of high rises on the Lion Farm estate in Oldbury is set to go ahead this year, including new windows, external cladding, improvements to the balconies.

Hundreds gather to celebrate Jo's life

MP for West Bromwich East, Tom Watson, with hundreds of people at Sandwell Park Farm

TOM Watson held back the tears as he paid tribute to his murdered colleague Jo Cox. The MP for West Bromwich East and the deputy leader of the Labour Party, was speaking at a Great Get Together event at Sandwell Park Farm which took place on Saturday afternoon.

It was one of thousands of events taking place across the country over the weekend in memory of Mrs Cox, the MP for Batley and Spen who was murdered on June 16 last year. The Jo Cox Foundation, set up her by husband Brendan, had asked communities across the country to organise events.

The Great Get Together in Sandwell included face-painting, badge-making and a craft competition.

An emotional Mr Watson said: "We were honouring Jo's memory in a way that she would expect us and want us to do which is to bring all communities together for a big family event. We got all faiths and no faiths along to the event, people from all over the borough sharing food and events and having fun. I am immensely proud of the people who got together."

Asked about Ms Cox, Mr Watson added: "I look back at the day we lost her. It was undoubtedly the worst day of my life as a member of parliament. Jo was a remarkable woman and I think she could have gone very far in public life had she still been with us, which is why I think tens of thousands of people have committed to honour the principles that drove her.

"Standing up for the principles of greater tolerance and understanding are powerful forces that her murderer did not he realise he was going to unleash – but he has done. Good will conquer evil."

MP Jo Cox, who was murdered last June

Researchers' virtual work will be going swimmingly

UNIVERSITY academics are working with marine researchers to create new types of virtual reality for visitors to an aquarium.

The academics from the University of Birmingham are working with the National Marine Aquarium.

They have been exploring how advanced visualisation techniques can be used to better understand Britain's coasts since 2004.

The new virtual reality representation is of Europe's first artificial reef, which will also allowed the public to explore a 3D shipwreck in real-time by piloting a virtual remotely operated vehicle using a gaming hand controller.

The projects saw the team develop new software techniques in artificial life, which studied and simulated the behaviour of biological organisms and systems.

Mark Duchesne, general manager at the National Marine Aquarium, said: "At the NMA we are committed to investing in projects which will allow us to better understand and preserve marine life.

"The University of Birmingham is a centre of academic excellence, producing ground-breaking technology, which we have been delighted to harness in Plymouth.

"Virtual and augmented reality provides a unique lens through which to explore otherwise hidden marine environments, making them not just accessible to experts but to all our visitors, as we all have an important part to play in protecting our oceans."

Apprenticeship firm in move

AN apprenticeship, training and education provider has moved into the first floor of a prominent Black Country office block.

Succeed has taken part of the first floor at Landchard House, West Bromwich, in a deal put together by agents Bond Wolfe. The firm has agreed a five year lease on 2,173 sq ft of space.

There is now just one suite remaining in the Victoria Street building.

Bond Wolfe managing partner James Mattin said: "Succeed is opening an office and training centre in the Black Country enabling them to reach a wider audience and offer their learning courses to even more people.

"Landchard House continues to be a very popular location as this latest deal testifies."

Community hub plan for premises

AN industrial unit may become a community hub. An application to change the use of the unit, in Albert Street, Wednesbury, has been submitted. If it gets the green light, then the building could play host to a model rail club and activities for over 60s.

Charity boss is fined for racial abuse of cabbie

THE deputy boss of a charity helping people getting in to work has been fined more than £600 after racially abusing a taxi driver.

Susan Dimmock, deputy chief executive of Walsall-based Steps To Work, was found guilty of racially aggravated harassment after a trial.

The charity, which receives funding from the EU and the National Lottery, helps people in the Black Country and Staffordshire get in to work through training and advice.

Dimmock, 52, of Edmonton Close, Cannock, abused taxi driver Muddasar Ali, who drove her home on the night of October 31.

She denied racially aggravated harassment, but was found guilty by magistrates after a one-day trial last Thursday. She was fined £623 and told to pay a victim surcharge of £30 and court costs of £362.

Andrew Dimmock was also found guilty of two charges in relation to the same incident.

The 50-year-old of the same address was in the taxi. Following a conversation between the couple and Mr Ali, it was alleged he grabbed the driver's radio equipment, breaking his bluetooth device. It was said he also ripped the driver's display licence.

He was convicted of assault and criminal damage by magistrates. He was fined £173 and ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £30, £25 compensation and £362 court costs.

Steps To Work was set up in 1999. The charity claims to have helped 34,000 people into employment.

Virtual replicas of organs on way

A SYSTEM which allows medical practitioners to view virtual replicas of patients' organ and body parts is being developed by academics in the West Midlands.

Researchers at Birmingham City University's digital media technology Lab are devising the system which enables users to interact with virtual models and patient data using freehand movements.

It will allow users to navigate and demonstrate patient data using hand motions and gestures.

Dr Ian Williams said: "We are developing this system as a platform to allow medical professionals to interact with genuine patient data and manipulate it by hand to educate and inform patients."

All set for summer serenade at church

A CHORAL society is hosting a summer serenade at a church next month.

Halesowen Choral Society will play Hasbury Methodist Church on Albert Road on July 8, from at 7.30pm and tickets are £6. Call 0121 550 7206 for more information.

Flour mill's in the mix for online auction

Built in 1840, in Union Street, the flour mill site has a guide price of £150,000

AN historic former flour mill dating back to the 1840s in Tipton is going under the hammer. The building in Union Street has also been a Conservative club and a social club and is now up for grabs in an online auction on June 28 and 29.

Built in 1840 to house Tipton's Union Flour Mill, the property has a guide price of £150,000.

Richard Reed MRICS, head of property at John Pye Property, said: "We are looking forward to putting this property up for auction, it has beautiful characteristics from its time as both a flour mill between 1840 and 1909 – before becoming a base for Tipton Conservative Club and then a thriving social club."

The main building is two storeys. Access to the basement level is partially available from the street and car park. The social club currently houses a darts room, snooker room, an 'L' shaped bar area, function suite, office, fitted kitchen, three cellars, beer patio and a store area. It also has living accommodation upstairs with three-double bedrooms.

A blue plaque was unveiled at the building on August 18 1990 by Tipton Civic Society. The lot is part of John Pye Property's biggest ever auction featuring £7.5 million of property. Richard added: "Turning online clicks into bricks is something we pride ourselves on and we know the online method and ease of bidding on the go or from a portable device is what our sellers, agents and buyers want."

Visit www.johnpye.co.uk/property-auctions to bid or phone 0115 970 6060 for more information. Viewings are available by appointment.

1990 plaque launch — courtesy of Tipton Civic Society

Strip club has sexual shows licence revoked

A STRIP club where a man was left with 'life-changing' injuries following a brawl has had its sexual entertainment licence revoked.

Bing Gentlemen's Club in West Bromwich town centre will be forced to cease all lap dancing activity unless its bosses successfully appeal the decision.

The club also had its premises licence suspended to allow bosses time to make changes such as installing improved CCTV and lighting.

It means the club could continue to operate as a bar serving alcohol without any sexual entertainment.

A licence review hearing on Monday heard West Midlands Police had wide-ranging concerns about how Bing was being run which came to light following the disorder. These included a lack of consideration given to the possibility of its dancers having been trafficked.

Disregard

Police licensing officer Mick Boyd, said: "It is not thought staff at the club could determine if the Romanian women [working at the club] were under age to work as lap dancers.

"No steps were taken by staff to prevent child sexual exploitation. The club was run for complete disregard for licensing rules and any consideration of possible exploitation or trafficking of the dancers who worked there."

Police sought to have the club's sexual entertainment licence revoked following the 'large scale disorder' in the early hours of March 5.

A 27-year-old man was found with serious head injuries outside Bing which is located on the corner of High Street and Victoria Street.

Monday's hearing heard the man has 'life-changing' injuries and is now partly paralysed down his life side. A police investigation into the incident is on-going.

Licence holder, Shanvir Singh, and lease owner, Henry Nandra, were present at the hearing in Oldbury and represented by solicitor Avi Pawar, who argued it would have been a 'draconian' step had the premises licence been revoked given there been only one 'serious incident'. He also set out a number of measures which had since been implemented.

Mr Singh and Mr Nandra declined to comment after the review hearing.

A splashing time in the sun at park

Sandwell bathed in scorching weather over the weekend and into the start of the week, with the heatwave dying down as we head towards the weekend. Fortunately though, for siblings Ivy, Paddy and Emer Bevan, seen above, of West Bromwich, Dartmouth Park's 'splashpad' is now very much, up and running and allowed them to cool off during the hottest day of the year so far, where temperatures were creeping over the 30-degree mark.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Biggest toy fair due at the NEC

BRITAIN'S biggest toy fair will arrive in Birmingham this summer. The Toy Collectors fair is taking place at the NEC on August 20.

There will be 550 stands filled with all kinds of collectables for sale from the UK's leading dealers. Models of cars, lorries, buses and aeroplanes, Star Wars, James Bond and many other sci-fi and TV related collectables, teddy bears will be on offer.

Prices start from just £1 for a brand new action figure and can go up to several hundred pounds for rare 1950s Dinky Toys. Tickets start from £6.50.

Under fire car wash bid backed

COUNCILLORS have insisted a plan to build a car wash on the site of a former pub should go ahead, despite being recommended for refusal.

A proposed car wash on the site of the former New Talbot pub in Smethwick was said to be an 'unsuitable design'. The applicant, Gurnam Gill, also submitted plans for a car park with 17 spaces and to hire four staff.

At a planning meeting, Councillor Bob Piper said: "The place is dreadful. Why would we want to discourage development?" The former pub was partially demolished in 2011.

Ozzy – the voice of tram tannoy

IT was grins all round as tram passengers on the Wolverhampton to Birmingham line were treated to tannoy announcements by Midlands rocker Ozzy Osbourne.

The Black Sabbath legend was lined up to treat travellers to public announcements for one day only as part of BBC Music Day celebrations.

He said: "Being named one of 2017's Music Day Ambassadors was an unexpected and wonderful honour."

Colin Saward, of Midland Metro, said: "Ozzy already has a tram named after him."

Warning on Freeview channels disruption

FREEVIEW TV signals could be affected by new 4G mobile masts, homeowners have been warned.

Masts have been switched on in Tipton to boost signal strength for internet access but it is thought it could lead to interference with Freeview signals as they are on a similar frequency.

Anyone experiencing problems can call at800, a company set up under the direction of the Government, on 0808 13 13 800.

Closure for works

A ROAD in West Bromwich will close for almost a month. St Vincent's Crescent, near Harvills Hawthorn School, will be closed for 24 hours a day to enable L Healy to carry out work.

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COUNTY NEWS

Zero hours staff figure on the up

THE number of zero hour and agency contracted workers has more than doubled in West Midlands since 2011 to 168,000, new research from GMB union reveals.

The findings come as the union reveals that up to a third of the workforce is in 'precarious employment'.

Joe Morgan, GMB Regional Secretary said: "Here on our own doorstep in the West Midlands we are witnessing an epidemic of precarious work. Hundreds of thousands go to work either not knowing their hours, if they'll be able to pay the bills, or what their long term prospects are."

Comedian Duncan chased back home

MIDLAND-BORN TV comic Duncan Norvelle, whosc catchphrase is 'chase me', is the star of a charity evening to support the Stroke Association.

Duncan was told he would never walk or talk again after being paralysed down his left side following a massive stroke five years ago. Organiser Katherine Yates, from Brownhills, interviewed the comic on a radio show, and heard his 'remarkable story'.

A Variety Evening with Duncan Norvelle and Friends is at Solihull's Land Rover Sports on September 15. Tickets are on sale at £10 (in advance) and can be purchased at landroversc.co.uk.

Karate success for sixth form student

A STUDENT has taken gold in the British Karate Federation Home Nations. Lewis Bradbury, sixth form student at Q3 Academy in Great Barr, was awarded the medal in the Under 21 Male Kumite Category at the competition held on May 27 and 28.

He came up against some strong fighters, but defeated them all to take gold. Lewis is in the middle of his final A-Level exams and has got an unconditional offer to study psychology at Coventry University in September.

Dragonboats' den is Brindleyplace

BUSINESSES from across the West Midlands are getting ready to take to the canals to play a part in the biggest Brindleyplace Dragonboat Race to date.

Sponsored by Deutsche Bank and now in its 18th year, the annual fundraiser will are aiming to raise more than £100,000 in aid of Cure Leukaemia's £1 million Centre Appeal.

To find out more about this year's race visit www.brindleyplace.com.

Weston time for tea

AFTERNOON tea experiences are on offer at Weston Park this summer.

Three experiences will take place on August 8, 9 and 10 and be served in the Victorian Orangery. A Taste of Summer is £27.50 per person, or £33.50 per person with a glass of Prosecco and includes admission.

Youngsters in tune for fundraising CD

A PRIMARY school has recorded a song to raise funds for a charity started by and living on in memory of an 11-year-old boy.

All pupils at St James Church of England Primary in Oldbury took part in recording 'Believe' – and its CD single is currently in production.

The school plans to sell the CD in the community in the next few weeks, with the aim of raising £1,000 for Help Harry Help Others – in memory of Harry Moseley.

Harry who went to school in Sheldon, Birmingham, organised and attended nearly 100 events while battling an inoperable brain tumour to raise funds and awareness for brain cancer. He died in 2011.

St James' deputy headteacher, Alex Rawlings said: "I think the children were quite surprised that it was all being recorded professionally. They were excited about that and knowing it will be on a CD. It's a massively positive thing, and the children really went for it – they really enjoyed it.

"Fingers crossed, we can sell a lot of records and raise a lot of money for the charity."

Alongside the recording, the school have run the Help Harry Help Others bracelet enterprise – making and selling bracelets to boost funds. Mr Rawlings said the school was hoping to raise £1,000 from CD and bracelet sales.

Other fundraising projects have been held and the school ran a competition to design the CD cover which was won by Sophia Banner.

For more information on Help Harry Help Others or to make a donation, visit hhho.org.uk

Great and good are awarded in honours

Report by Simon Stone

UNSUNG heroes from across the Black Country and Staffordshire were among the great and the good recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours list.

Volunteers, business leaders, charity workers and police officers have all been honoured for their efforts in the latest list revealed at the weekend.

Selfless Tipton couple Martin and Barbara Hale who have cared for more than 100 foster children over two decades were awarded MBEs.

The couple have cared for 126 children since signing up as foster parents back in 1996 and been praised for always 'going the extra mile' for the kids. Mrs Hale, 64, said they were 'overjoyed' to be recognised for their efforts. She said: "

"It's nice to think people have put us forward for this.

Challenging

"It's been so rewarding, especially when the kids turn out well and then their children are brilliant as well."

Mr and Mrs Hale, who used to live in Dudley but now live in Tipton, have fostered 126 children on a mixture of short and long-term placements for Sandwell Council.

They said fostering is a 'challenging' task but hugely rewarding.

One example of the impact lorry driver Mr Hart, 61, and his wife have had on their foster children is the fact the couple hosted a Boxing Day meal where more than 40 turned up.

Mrs Hale said: "It's hard a times given what some of the kids have been through. But we treat everyone we foster like our own children, the council always say we make them our own.

"It is so humbling when you realise what the children have come through."

Artist Idris Khan has been awarded an OBE for his services to art. Mr Khan, from Walsall, did his foundation degree at Walsall College but left the borough at 19 and now lives and works in London.

Walsall artist Idris Khan, gets an OBE

Stalwart Margaret Thompson

Smethwick's Dame Julie Walters

Martin and Barbara Hale, of Tipton

Chief Constable Jane Sawyers

Jenny Jones, who received an MBE

Mr Khan attended Park Hall Primary School and Barr Beacon School before Walsall College. From there, he graduated from the University of Derby and completed a Master's degree at the Royal College of Art in London in 2004. He was back in his home town earlier this year when his exhibition, A World Within, was on display at the New Art Gallery. His father and brother still live in Walsall, while his sister lives in Birmingham.

Meanwhile, one community stalwart, Margaret Thompson, has been given an British Empire Medal (BEM) for services to the community in Shareshill.

Mrs Thompson, aged 76, said she was 'absolutely shocked and surprised' to win the award.

Her commendation says she 'spends most of her life contributing and fundraising for the local community of Shareshill and Little Saredon'. Jenny Jones, the founder and manager of Inspired Foundations, was given an MBE for services to adoption. Jenny, from Dudley, was named in the honours list on the day she celebrated her 37th birthday. She said: "I think a huge part of me hasn't quite taken it all on board. It's very weird, but an amazing feeling."

Dr Kevin Rowland, who lives in West Bromwich and is the facilitator in systems and services at Sandwell Council, has been honoured with an MBE for services to special educational needs and disabilities.

Chief Constable Jane Sawyers has been awarded the Queen's Police Medal for distinguished service in the Birthday Honours as she retires after 33-years of dedicated service to the communities of Staffordshire.

And in the world of entertainment, Smethwick-born actress Julie Walters was made a dame. The 67-year-old becomes a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire for services to drama.

Escape plan alert after huge blaze at high rise

FIRE chiefs in the Midlands have urged people living in high-rise flats to make sure they know what to do in the event of a fire following the devastating blaze in London.

West Midlands Fire Service said it was vital residents knew their 'escape plan' so they could get out as fast as possible.

Chief Fire Officer Phil Loach said firefighters train to be as prepared as possible for such large fires. He said: "There are nearly 1,000 residential buildings in the West Midlands with four storeys or more and more than half have at least eight storeys.

Important

"It is vitally important that anyone who lives or works in a high-rise building makes sure they know their building's specific escape plan, which should be clearly and regularly communicated by the owner or landlord."

He added: "

"We work closely with the landlords and owners of tower blocks throughout the West Midlands to help them do all they can to ensure the safety of people who live or work in them."

Hereford and Worcester Fire Service area commander Mark Preece said: "Working smoke alarms can provide the few vital extra seconds needed to escape in a fire.

"We would encourage people to prepare and practise their plan of action and ensure that escape routes are clear, which will help ensure a speedy exit."

'Strong voice' pledge by Vaz

VALERIE Vaz has vowed to continue to be a 'strong voice' for Walsall South after she was confirmed as Labour's shadow leader of the House of Commons.

Jeremy Corbyn has confirmed Ms Vaz will continue in the role that she first took up in October last year.

Speaking after the MPs' swearing in ceremony at the House of Commons, Ms Vaz said: "I was pleased to be sworn in and take my seat in the House of Commons.

"Jeremy Corbyn has confirmed that I will be continuing as Shadow Leader of the House of Commons. I will continue to represent residents and be a strong voice for Walsall South."

Ms Vaz was re-elected as the MP for Walsall South, increasing her majority by 2,885 to 8,892.

Town gets ready for big festival

AN annual community festival is returning next month.

Darlaston Community Festival will take place on July 22 at All Saints Church between 11am and 3pm.

The event is free and will this year include a cake baking competition.

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Baggies fans among best behaved in top flight

WEST Bromwich Albion fans are among the best-behaved in the Premier League, according to figures from the British Transport Police.

Officers were called to nine offences Baggies fans were involved in during one season. This was out of 233 incidents involving Premier League clubs. Albion came 13th in a list of Premier League clubs said to have the 'worst culprits for hooliganism' by the BTP.

Top was West Ham, with 23 offences involving club supporters recorded. Manchester United, Manchester City, Arsenal and Chelsea came joint second, with 21 incidents each. In total, the BTP recorded 2,030 offences over the 2015/16 season – up four per cent from the year before, and the first rise in 10 years.

A BTP spokesman said: "Unfortunately, on football match days, law-abiding members of the public and rail staff are subjected to abusive, obscene and sometimes racially offensive chanting, as well as display of violent behaviour."

The three most common football-related offences are public disorder, 60 per cent, alcohol offences, 20 per cent, and violent disorder, 16 per cent.

Among the reported offences involving Baggies fans were incidents of disorderly behaviour, affray and grievous bodily harm. The GBH incident took place on September 19, 2015 – a tie against Aston Villa in Birmingham. A male was waiting for a train when he saw a group of rival fans. It was alleged that the group of supporters punched the victim.

Shape of things to come at final

FOR those already missing Britain's Got Talent, Sandwell Council's SHAPE Team has the answer.

From 90, young hopefuls have been whittled down to 17 semi-finalists.

Once the votes have been counted they will be combined with judges votes and the finalists will be announced. Tickets are now available for the SHAPE Your Talent grand final on June 30 at St Michael's C of E High School in Rowley Regis.

The show starts at 7pm with doors opening at 6.15pm. Tickets cost £5 each. Finalists will take to the stage and perform in front of a panel of judges. Winners will be chosen in two categories – age eight to 13 and age 14 to 19. To get tickets visit sandwell.gov.uk/shapeyourtalent.

Bottoms up! Pub under hammer

THE Five Ways pub, on Cradley Heath High Street, which has been converted into retail space and flats, is to go under the hammer at an SDL Bigwood Auction at Villa Park on July 6 – guide price £250-£275,000.

Blind Dave kicks off role in stage show

Graeme Braidwood with Blind Dave

LEGENDARY fundraiser Blind Dave Heeley has taken part in a new stage show. Stories from Baggies, Blues and Villa fans will feature in the new show.

The drama of theatre meets the thrill of football in Stadium, which is heading to a West Midlands theatre.

The show features real stories and memories from fans from across the Midlands footballing spectrum – with their unconditional love for their teams coming under the spotlight.

Stadium features interviews, insights, music and songs from fans and inspirational supporters. Among the highlights are a bagpiper who has played at hundreds of matches, to fundraising legend and Baggies fan Blind Dave as well as the bride who got married in the colours of her beloved Blues and the Villa Rockets Powerchair football team.

Dave Heeley said: "The story is primarily about Blues and Villa fans, I think they've thrown me into the mix for a bit of Premier League class.

"It's been absolutely fantastic so far, I've really enjoyed treading the boards. Seamus (Dave's guide dog) is with me too – he's the star of the show I think. It's a lovely thing to be part of, there's great banter and friendship between us, a really lovely feeling."

Aside from his stint on the stage, Blind Dave is edging closer to the halfway mark in Great Run series he embarked on at the start of the year.

He's aiming to run all 26 of the Great Run series and estimates to have raised about £4,000 already for the Albion Foundation

You can see him on stage in the Stadium at Birmingham's Repertory Theatre until June 17.

Cassidy travellers given ban on setting up camps

SANDWELL Council, supported by West Midlands Police, has secured an injunction banning a travelling family from setting up unauthorised encampments anywhere in Sandwell.

Fourteen members of the Cassidy family were named in the injunction granted by His Honour Judge McKenna, sitting at the High Court of Justice in Birmingham.

It also forbids anyone setting up an unauthorised encampment on 17 Sandwell Council-owned sites including parks, playing fields and open spaces.

The court heard how the Cassidy family had caused anti-social behaviour including assaults, large scale disorder, threats, intimidation, criminal damage and an extreme amount of fly-tipping on sites across Sandwell.

The group, along with up to 40 caravans and vehicles, set up camp on Sandwell Council and privately-owned sites more than 25 times between June 2014 and August 2016.

Parks, business estates, car parks and playing fields were all targeted – often with human waste and tons of rubbish left behind once the group were moved on.

Evidence

The head of the family, John Cassidy, is now banned from the whole of Sandwell, while the rest of the family are prohibited from setting up unauthorised encampments, causing damage to barriers and fly-tipping anywhere in Sandwell. In addition to the order on the Cassidy family, the injunction also bans unauthorised encampments on 17 council sites regularly targeted by groups with caravans.

Judge McKenna granted the injunction based on substantial evidence submitted by the council and West Midlands Police.

Council Leader Councillor Steve Eling said: "The Cassidy family have caused anti-social behaviour, threatened council and police officers, intimidated residents and fly-tipped on sites around Sandwell for some time. This injunction is a message to the Cassidys and other groups who set up unauthorised encampments that we will not tolerate this behaviour."

Sandwell Council's cabinet member for regeneration and investment Councillor Paul Moore added: "Unauthorised encampments cause misery for residents, cost the council thousands of pounds a year and take up valuable police time and resources. This has to stop."

£200m metro link moves step closer

Artist impression of the Midland Metro extension to Brierley Hill via Dudley

THE £200 MILLION Midland Metro extension is on the verge of getting the green light after final plans were unveiled to Transport Secretary Chris Grayling.

West Midlands Mayor Andy Street met with Mr Grayling at the Houses of Parliament in London to secure the multi-million pound funding for the project which has been more than a decade in the making.

It marks a major step forward for the scheme – which will see the tram service start in Wednesbury and stop at Great Bridge, Tipton, Merry Hill and Dudley Zoo.

Mr Street, who presented the Secretary of State with a business plan alongside Transport for West Midlands managing director Laura Shoaf, said: "It is hard to understate just how important this project is to the Black Country. The business case shows that for every pound invested in this project, it will return £2.50 for the local economy."

The seven-mile line will run along part of the former South Staffordshire railway from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill town centre with 17 stops, including at the DY5 Enterprise Zone at the Waterfront, Merry Hill Shopping Centre, Dudley Bus Station, and at Castle Hill for the Black Country Living Museum and Dudley Castle.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Pub landlord to 'assess options'

THE landlord of a troubled pub will 'assess his options' after its opening hours were cut by licensing chiefs.

The Knights Quest, on High Street, Blackheath, will now have to shut at 1.30am on Fridays and Saturdays after police took action following 35 incidents over the past two years. It previously stayed open until 2.30am.

Sandwell Council licensing bosses ordered the pub to improve security at a hearing on Monday.

Ben Williams, acting on behalf of landlord Thomas Lloyd, said he was disappointed with the decision.

Awards launched for best support

AWARDS celebrating support given to vulnerable people have been launched. The Sandwell and West Birmingham Equality Awards have been held annually since 2015.

They recognise and celebrate work undertaken by local, groups and organisations to address inequalities in health and well-being. The clinical commissioning group will shortlist projects in September, with the winners announced at Villa Park on November 2. People can apply at sandwellandwestbhamccg.nhs.uk/equality-awards

College hosting two open events

SANDWELL College is holding two open events at its Central Campus in Spon Lane, West Bromwich. There is an open evening on Thursday, June 22, from 5pm to 8pm and an open day and summer fair on Saturday, June 24, between 11am and 3pm.

Visitors will be able to find out about about A-Levels, a range of courses available from September and apprenticeships. The open day will also include an F1 car simulator and food stands.

Putting together a date for Legoland site

WORK on the new Legoland Discovery Centre Birmingham will start later this year. The 3,300 sq ft unique indoor attraction is based on the popular Lego bricks, and opens within the Barclaycard Arena in 2018.

Specifically designed for children aged three to 10 to enjoy with family and friends, Legoland Discovery Centre Birmingham will include a range of themed play areas, interactive rides, party rooms for birthdays, a 4D cinema and the popular Miniland area.

Nelly to play Brum

RAP star Nelly will perform in Birmingham later this year. The 42-year-old Texas-born musician is best known for an array of hits, including Dilemma, Ride Wit Me, Hot In Herre and Grillz.

He will perform at the O2 Academy on Wednesday, November 15.

IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews

Fire horror shows best and worst of society

THERE are some things words alone can never convey. Even the harrowing pictures from the Grenfell Tower block fire do not really capture the enormity of what happened. One night people were going about their normal business, maybe preparing for work the following day. Then, little more than an hour later, they died the most awful of deaths.

An advert for a flat on the 18th floor was still on the internet last week, waxing lyrical about the block's recent refurbishment, and portraying it as a stylish, desirable place to live. It said the flat had now been let. I wonder what happened to the poor tenant.

We should remember that such disasters are few and far between, but that will not stop thousands of people who live in similar blocks across the country wondering how safe their homes are. And how many of us will be looking carefully at the fire exits when we take our holidays in multi-storey hotels this year?

The tragedy has also brought out both the best and the worst in humanity. One the one hand we have seen the heroism of the firefighters running into the building, knowing full well that their lives were at risk. And the community, which rallied round so quickly and so generously to help. Not forgetting England footballer Ryan Bertrand, who out of his own pocket has offered to help some of those displaced by the fire.

Then, on the other hand, there is the woman who decided to take a few selfies with the burning building in the background. Perhaps we should cut her a bit of slack, as she doesn't sound the sharpest tool in the box.

What is distasteful, though, is that while the fire crews were searching for bodies, the usual suspects found it impossible to resist scoring a few cheap points.

On the one side, there are the shrill voices scenting blood, seizing the chance to turn it into some sort of class war and pin blame on the beleaguered prime minister. People like spoiled little rich girl Lily Allen, who was making all sorts of outrageous claims while the fire was still burning.

Then, at the other end of the spectrum, there are the mean-spirited racists whose main concern appears to be the nationalities of the victims, and why they had been given council flats.

Certainly, the Grenfell fire raises many extremely uncomfortable questions, not least about the renovation works, the claims by residents about fire safety that were ignored, and why it was deemed more important to spend millions of pounds on cosmetic refurbishment than installing a sprinkler system. A lot of people will have a lot of difficult questions to answer.

But this probing needs to be handled with forensic detail, tact, sensitivity and impartiality.

Something tells me Lily Allen is probably not the best person to do that.

Voting's over, but not the fall-out as politicians wait

The game's afoot, Watson – as cobwebs unlock a mystery for Peter on holiday

Too soon? Jezza says he's ready for another election, good time to go on your hols...

Not soon enough – Boris's Prime Ministerial ambitions could be just what Labour needs

Could Bo-Jo hand Jez key to No 10?

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

BEER, Devon: At 10am yesterday it was too hot to sit on the beach here in Beer. Exactly one week ago, we had to light a coal fire to get our house warm. In weather terms, bizarre is becoming the new normal.

GREAT excitement at our holiday cottage, for we have become a crime scene. Just before we arrived at the cottage someone used a crowbar to break into the utility shed in the back yard. The security bloke from the rental company gave it a thorough going-over. He pointed out, detective-like, that the door lock was full of cobwebs, so obviously no key had been used, and the bolt was in the unlocked position. So we have a would-be burglar using a crowbar to force open a door which was already unlocked. Puzzling, eh?

IN truth, this crime is a mystery only because generations of cop dramas have led us to believe that criminals are brilliant strategists and crimes are complex and meticulously planned. What fiendish conspiracy is afoot here, Watson? The reality? It is that most burglars are not bright. They tend to be village idiots with a headful of dope and a bellyful of booze, too dim even to try the door before using the crowbar. Over to you, Sherlock.

WHEREVER you go in this varied and tribal United Kingdom of ours, some things remain constant. Like the eagerness of the authorities to develop their own variations on the English language. For instance, take this officialdom-cobblers from Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service describing a recent blaze: "Firefighters from Helston, Tolvaddon and Mullion have been dealing with a fully-involved property fire. At the height of the incident it was sectorised into two sectors."

PERFECT Med-blue skies from dawn to dusk. The idyll is spoiled only by the constant whining of what sounds like a particularly annoying lawnmower suspended in the heavens. Turns out to be a microlight. One man's amusement is a thousand families' irritation.

AFTER the nightmarish fire in Kensington, the focus of most comment seems to be on how the fire spread up Grenfell Tower, with the new cladding allegedly acting like an external chimney and turning the building into something resembling a blast furnace. But there is another issue which must today be haunting anyone living in any sort of high-rise block, whether fitted with cladding or not. Assuming this fire began in one of the apartments, how could it possibly have escaped from what is essentially a sealed concrete box? The exterior finish of Grenfell Tower may be a key factor in this disaster but was there also an issue right at the heart of the building?

IN these days of computer-generated text and spell-checkers, a reader asks how can it be that a van dealer in Wolverhampton has paid for the following to be professionally painted on the rear of its vehicles: "Take advantage of our price guranratee."

JEREMY Corbyn insists he's ready to fight another election. He must be the only person in the UK who is.

AND before we start sharpening the pencils for the polling stations yet again, are we even convinced that Corbyn genuinely wants to be prime minister? He has been the eternal urban revolutionary with a 40-year career of carping and criticising other people's policies from the safety of the the backbenches. If he became PM, approaching his 70th year, he'd suddenly be responsible for all sorts of things. I bet he'd run a mile from a career change like that.

LABOUR'S best hope of taking power will come if the Tories are daft enough to elect Boris Johnson as their leader. Corbyn may have a few skeletons in his cupboard but Johnson's is one massive, heaving, bone-packed ossuary.

MEANWHILE, as Downing Street insists the DUP will not demand any special favours for supporting Theresa May's government with a wafer-thin majority, the Department of Transport unveils plans for B2BB, the £48 billion Belfast to Blackpool Bridge.

ACCORDING to something called the British Nutrition Foundation, children are hopelessly confused about where their food comes from. Nearly a third of kids aged between five and seven thought cheese came from a plant and some thought fish fingers were made of chicken. I'm not sure how much this matters. Until I was seven I believed cats were female dogs. Never did me any harm.

I WROTE some days ago about new research showing that being married is good for your health. Yesterday, on the cliff path from Beer to Branscombe, we met a man and his wife. He was wearing yellow shoes and white socks, as though he had a large egg on each foot. I thought spouses were supposed to stop that sort of thing.

TALKING POINT

Homing in on many of today's problems

IT'S always difficult, I suppose to create new buildings which bring with them longevity as far as their style is concerned.

We have all heard the raging arguments concerning the Birmingham Library, from a Spyro Gyro accident, to being ' a statement of both civic importance and friendliness'. Or how about the Selfridges store in Brum, Walsall's New Art Gallery, or Wolverhampton's spectacular Wishbone Bridge for the Metro, or the relatively new bus station?

All very worthy and notable out-there designs to create a reaction, good or bad, and everyone is entitled to have their say.

So what about closer to home – literally? New houses, or at least the concept of new houses, seems to derive from a hotch-potch of 1970s boxy minimalism and traditionalist red-brick yearnings for when houses were part of a proper community.

Having a gander around housing estates which seem to be cropping up all over the place, there seems to be no soul any more. Things just appear to be too clever, too sensible and too detached from people actually connecting.

Before the cul-de-sacs there were proper streets with front doors next to each other and people actually chatting to their neighbours.

It still goes on in some parts of our region, I know, amazing, actual conversation. Not being the most outgoing person in the world, it took me nearly 13 years to actually converse with my next-door neighbour in a previous abode. And this seems to be more and more the norm these days.

Meanwhile, everything now seems to be a statement. A statement of standing in society – the big 4x4 car on the drive; a statement of fashion and coolness – the new Minis which seem to be everywhere on our roads. And then comes the houses: steps for no apparent reason; three floors; garages which aren't actually big enough to fit any kind of four-wheeled vehicle inside; and gardens, which these days, if they are big enough to swing an actual cat around, boy, you know you've really made it!

It's no wonder we're a nation of ever-increasing stressed-out individuals, as we all practically live on top of each other, and despise each other into the bargain!

We hear all the older generation's tales of popping round each other's house for a cup of tea and never shutting the front door – well, those days seem long gone, which is a real shame.

So, perhaps it's time to go back to an era when there wasn't so much emphasis placed on square footage (estate agents please note!), and as we enter a period of society's existence when there may be more time available for people to be at home, shouldn't that actually be somewhere we actually enjoy being – not only as individuals, but as communities again?

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Raising awareness over transplants

I'M writing to let your readers know that right now in the West Midlands there are 270 people currently waiting for a kidney transplant, and every single day in the UK one person will die whilst waiting for their kidney. This has to change.

Most people don't want to think about their kidneys, but the reality is that one in eight people will develop Chronic Kidney Disease which can affect their general health and may ultimately mean they might need dialysis or a transplant in order to stay alive. The average time waiting for a kidney on the transplant list is three years and there are almost 30,000 people on dialysis in the UK, a treatment that leaves patients hooked up to machines for hours at a time for several days every week. Kidney patients constantly tell us that greater awareness of kidney disease and the impact it can have on their lives would be life-changing for them, which is why we're calling on your readers to become kidney aware by visiting www.kidneycareuk.org.

PADDY TABOR MVO
Chief Executive, Kidney Care UK

Hedgehogs now at risk

HEDGEHOGS are facing extinction. So why have hedgehog traps been brought into the UK from New Zealand? They are considered vermin there, as they eat the eggs of ground nesting birds.

They have been brought here for the same reason, to kill the animals that eat the eggs of the ground nesting birds, namely artificially-raised pheasants and partridge bred for shoots.

I contacted my MP about my concerns and in his reply, he included a reply from DEFRA that states that the traps will be laid in such a way that hedgehogs can't get into them. Really! And who is going to officiate over every trap to be used to make sure that hedgehogs cannot obtain entry?

Anyone who knows hedgehogs will tell you that if a hedgehog wants to get somewhere, he will. They are determined little animals and that is why they get into so much trouble.

JOAN LOCKLEY
Hedgehog Rescue

Corbyn was left looking like Santa

WE now know that the youth of Great Britain felt they had to come out and cast their vote, mostly for Labour because they cared about things like the NHS, austerity, the homeless, and European citizens' rights.

I remember when as a young man myself, being told if you don't vote Labour when you're young you have no heart.

It seems it had nothing to do with Mr Corbyn's promise to scrap university fees and write off debt, after all this is a caring generation, and they would never vote for such a selfish reason, like the older generation, would they? To aid their education let me explain the word free in political terms means someone else has to pay for it.

The great thing for Mr Corbyn is he doesn't have to deliver his party's promise. The election has left him looking like Father Xmas, giving out sweeties. Were the much loved Jeremy and his party, the real winner of this election?

ALAN J HUNT
West Bromwich

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST
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Growing cynicism towards politicians

SOME years ago I served nearly 20 years as an idealistic councillor. Now, my cynicism towards politicians grows with age.

Having voted Tory I am disappointed at the campaign and the outcome. With a suicide note, sorry, manifesto, they almost snatched defeat from the jaws of victory with penny pinching ideas to penalise their core supporters.

Then there is Labour. Jezza got student votes by promising free tuition fees and a refund of those paid. Sadly those who believed this should have remembered that Labour introduced tuition fees!

Not to forget the Lib Dems. They lost the referendum they refused us, then wanted another. Talk about a recount! And then not so poor Nick Clegg. If 'promoted' to the Lords, there is the £300 a day (plus expenses?) so I will not see him signing on comes Monday.

Looking at present earnings, how much would Churchill be worth today?

NAME AND ADDRESS SUPPLIED

Concerning safety signs

THE council recently installed 20mph signs in Pennyhill Lane.

IT seems CCTV would be more appropriate given the transgressions. Worse still, back to the 30 zone near the new build, the sign is behind a lamp post.

Nearby in Hollyhedge Road, the 30 sign is in front of a no entry sign. Does Sandwell Council understand road safety?

ROBERT WILLIAM WHITE
Wigmore

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Pools to close for essential maintenance

POOLS at Smethwick Swimming Centre will close next month to allow essential maintenance work to take place.

Sandwell Council is working with Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT) to ensure minimal disruption for customers while work is carried out for three weeks from August 28. Additional swimming sessions will be put on at nearby Langley Swimming Centre to accommodate Smethwick pool users while the work is carried out.

Councillor Richard Marshall, Sandwell's cabinet member for leisure, said the essential work was unfortunately unavoidable.

"We take pride in the excellent range of sports facilities across the borough but with such an ageing building it's inevitable that regular work has to be carried out," he said.

"Smethwick Leisure Centre is one of our oldest sports facilities. On this occasion the pools need to close for a few weeks however we will make sure the work is done quickly so our customers can get back to swimming at Smethwick as soon as possible."

Smethwick Leisure Centre's gym, dance studio, fitness classes and sauna steam facilities will remain open as usual while the work is being carried out.

Ash Rai, Chief Executive of SLT added: "We want to make sure there is minimal disruption of services to our customers."

For more information visit Sandwell Leisure Trust's website www.slt-leisure.co.uk

Ready for a Knight of great soul music

SOUL singer Gladys Knight has announced that she will play Birmingham next month.

The Empress Of Soul and seven-time Grammy Award winning icon – will play Birmingham's Symphony Hall on July 2. Gladys will be performing all her classics – Midnight Train To Georgia, Help Me Make It Through The Night – plus tracks from her latest album Where My Heart Belongs.

Tickets start from £45 and are available from www.ticketline.co.uk.

Back, from left, Det Sgt Vicky Lee, Det Supt Angie Whitaker, HR officer Caroline Miller, Ass Ch Con Sarah Boycott, Corinne Brazier and analyst Mandy Tanda. Seated, from left, Ch Supt Sally Bourner, Dep Ch Con Louisa Rolfe, and Ch Insp Yvonne Bruton

The original photograph, believed to hail from 1919, of the first women police officers, although some names are missing, back row, from left, not identified, Lucy Carlton, Catherine Downey, Sarah Hancox and Ellen Vernon. Seated, from left, not identified, Sgt Evelyn Miles, Adelaide Pearce

Snap back to police past of force's pioneering women

A GROUP of female police officers and staff have brought history to life by recreating an iconic photo taken almost 100 years ago.

The original image – unearthed from the West Midlands Police vaults – is believed to have been taken in 1919 and is the first depicting Birmingham Police's Women's Department. Women officers were first recruited in 1917 – with lock-up matrons Rebecca Lipscombe, who was aged 60 at the time, and 54-year-old Evelyn Miles being the pioneers – and by 1919 the unit had swelled to 10. As part of the force's centenary celebrations of women in policing, a group of present day officers and staff were photographed in period police costume in the historic cell block beneath Birmingham's Steelhouse Lane police station.

West Midlands Police museum volunteer Corinne Brazier said: "The original photo is really special to me – it shows a group of women who made history by becoming the first WPcs in the region.

"That achievement can't be overstated. They were the first to step into a male dominated profession, would have had to overcome obstacles and doubters, but made a great contribution and paved the way for thousands more to follow in their footsteps. We thought recreating that iconic picture would be a nice way to celebrate women in policing."

Ms Brazier wore the actual uniform used by Ellen Vernon in 1919 and which now hangs in the force's museum.

Other people in the photo donned other period police uniforms and hats to look the part – even though most were originally designed for male officers.

She added: "It wasn't exactly a tailor-made fit…it was quite uncomfortable and rough compared to today's soft, synthetic materials.

"I certainly wouldn't have fancied working an entire shift wearing that uniform." Fellow museum volunteer Inspector Steve Rice even spent some of his spare time replicating a distinctive, studded chair on which Sgt Evelyn Miles is pictured sitting on in the original photograph. Police historians have used archive files and officer records to identify all but two of the women in the original picture.

The names of the final two mystery women have been found but it is unclear exactly who is who.

Website for authority receives top rating

SANDWELL Council's website has been named among the best in the country, achieving a top four-star rating in a survey run by IT specialists.

The www.sandwell.gov.uk website got top marks in the 2016/17 Better Connected survey run by Socitm – the Society of IT Managers.

The website, which was rated among the best of the UK's 36 metropolitan districts, is also among only 36 of 416 in the country to get four stars.

It's the fourth year running the website has been top-rated with four stars. Sandwell is among only four metro boroughs nationally to get top marks and only six of 33 West Midlands councils with four stars.

The survey tested tasks including how to apply for housing, booking a bulky waste and requesting a social care assessment and care support for an older person.

Socitm also tested how well the website works on a mobile phone and how accessible it is for people with a visual impairment.

By Lucy Thompson

Councillor Steve Trow, Sandwell Council's cabinet member for core council services, said: "It's great to hear that the experts, as well as our residents, like our website.

"We're doing more and more business online. Our website has been visited more than 7.1million times in the past year, a figure which is growing by up to a million year-on-year.

"We have nearly 35,000 people signed up with a MySandwell account so they can report problems, check their council tax and other account balances, as well as request services from the council all in one place, 24 hours a day."

To sign up for a MyS-

Bear-ly there for public art trail

Bentley, the Bearwood bear, one of the participants in the Big Sleuth public art trail, which takes place over 10 weeks

SANDWELL is getting ready to welcome The Big Sleuth – a public art trail bringing bear-illiant bears to Sandwell, Birmingham and beyond. The 10-week project supporting Birmingham Children's Hospital Charity will see up to 100 decorated bear sculptures on display in the region's streets, parks and open spaces.

A sleuth is the collective noun for a group of bears and visitors will be able to sleuth their way around the trail which includes Sandwell, Birmingham, Solihull, Sutton Coldfield and Resorts World.

There will be six bears in Sandwell – three in West Bromwich and three in Bearwood. All of the bears have been designed by young people and local artists. Thirteen bear cubs designed by local schools will also be on show. The trail, being run in conjunction with Wild in Art, starts on Monday, July 10, until Sunday, September 17. Three of the bears will be auctioned off in aid of Birmingham Children's Hospital Charity in the autumn, while the three community bears will be found new homes around Sandwell.

For more details, go to www.thebigsleuth.co.uk

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9 Sandwell Chronicle Thursday, June 22, 2017

Pip focuses on needs of fleeing pregnant women

THEY are the heavily-pregnant women who have fled their own country in fear of their lives and are desperately looking for help when they arrive in the UK.

And for those women who find themselves in the Sandwell and West Birmingham area, that help comes in the form of community midwife Pip McKnight.

Pip, aged 39, has played a vital role in setting up the Attwood Green Health Centre, where they provide special support to the women and their babies who arrive in the UK as asylum seekers.

She said: "Among the asylum seekers are many women in the late stages of pregnancy who've had a traumatic experience getting here and who may even have suffered directly from violence along the way. As a midwife, I'm particularly concerned about helping women who might be at risk of a bad outcome to their pregnancy – so I wrote a pathway describing how we might take a more active role in supporting pregnant asylum seekers."

Safer

Pip explained why she is interested in these particular mums-to-be: "When I see these women and their babies, I hear their heart-breaking stories. They tell me how they had to flee their war-torn countries and how their family members have been killed.

"They have taken such a great risk to move to a safer country. I feel that I have the responsibility to make their experience within our maternity service and the NHS as positive as possible." Her excellent work has led to her being shortlisted for a Royal College of Midwives Award in the Reducing Inequality category.

She said of the achievement: "I was over the moon when I heard the news. I feel very proud but I know we still have a lot of work to do to improve the care for this group."

Pip joined the NHS just three years ago as a qualified midwife. She recalled: "Before I became a midwife, I was a youth worker. But then I realised I would like to provide more support to mothers and babies, so I decided to change my career path. It was a great choice and I have never looked back.

"I get to meet people from different walks of life and be part of the community. I guess one of the greatest things about being a community midwife is that you get to see the baby grow up. I regularly bump into women who I have looked after and their children. It is a wonderful thing to be part of the community."

On a typical day, Pip will run the antenatal and post-natal clinics to ensure mothers and babies are healthy. She also holds educational sessions for parents-to-be who can learn more about how to look after their babies.

"It's a great way to integrate with the community and bring people together", she added.

Pip will be starting a master's degree in September which will give her the opportunity and skills to carry out research into improving maternity care for newly arrived asylum seekers.

So who is Pip's inspiration? "Kathryn Gutteridge, our consultant midwife, is the reason that I decided to come to Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust," explained Pip, "She lives and breathes a woman-centred approach to midwifery and sets a standard of excellence for all midwives to aspire too.

"I'm so sad to see her retire this year but thrilled that she has been appointed President of The Royal College of Midwives. I can't thank her enough for the support she has given me."

NHS HEROES

ONCE again we focus some of our time on the quiet heroes of the NHS, from a wide variety of backgrounds doing a wide variety of jobs.

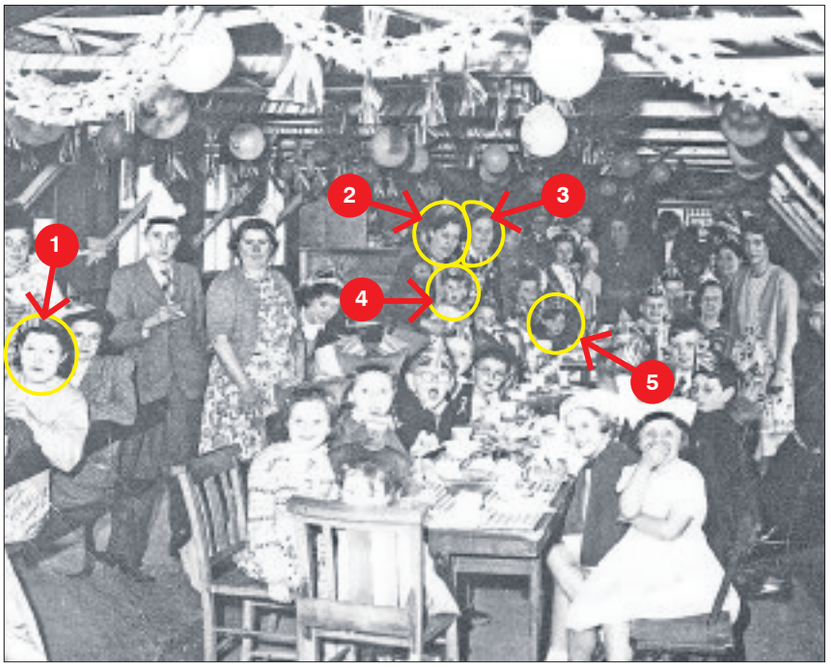
Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust is one of the Black Country's largest NHS organisations.

It employs 7,500 people, many of whom live locally.

Last year, the trust provides care from 150 locations.

This week we highlight:
PIP MCKNIGHT
Community Midwife

Coronation party picture names revealed



One of the pictures, sent in by Terry, which were originally published in the Sandwell Chronicle on June 1

LOCAL author and historian Terry Price has been back in touch following his latest plea to Chronicle readers after he asked whether anyone had information on pictures he had come across.

He had got hold of a photograph which shows a children's Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Day party on June 2, 1953.

At the time, Terry explained: "It appears to be taking place on the upper floor of a church hall, schoolroom, or community centre, judging by the roofing structure either side of the picture."Note the 'Brooke Bond Tea' party hats being worn. This photograph is thought to have been taken in the hall end area of West Bromwich."

However, having received feedback from a reader, he said: "The only reply that I have had was from Mrs Janet Deakin of Hateley Heath, West Bromwich, who is on the coronation picture along with her mother and friends. Janet's name then was Janet Stocking. The picture shows residents from in and around the Vicarage Road area of Hall End, West Bromwich attending a children's party celebrating the coronation.

"The event was held in the old prefabricated Sunday schoolroom adjacent to Hall End Methodist Church."

Terry explains that the names of people he had confirmed included: 1, Rene Stocking (Janet's mother); 2, Floss Smith; 3, Tilly Barker; 4 ? Barker; 5, Janet Stocking.

If anyone else has any more information, pleast contact Terry on 01922 635891.

Keith's 874-mile bike ride challenge

Keith Woodhall with his mother Juliet, who is a volunteer with the Samaritans, who he is doing a fundraising ride for

A KEEN cyclist will be getting in the saddle to take on an 874 mile challenge across the country to raise money for charity.

Keith Woodhall has completed a number of big biking fundraisers in the past – but the 52-year-old will take it up a notch for the Land's End to John O'Groats challenge in September. Baggies-fan Mr Woodhall, who is originally from Aldridge but now lives and works in Southampton, hopes to raise £3,000 for the Samaritans – which his mother Juliet Woodhall has volunteered with for over 21 years.

He will begin the challenge on September 10 and with his team of colleagues hopes to complete it in nine days. He said: "I've done a few cycling challenges in the past but nothing like this before. I did London to Paris about five years ago and I've done the Prudential RideLondon, which was about 100 miles.

"This is the biggest challenge of the lot. I work all over Europe and I've been training abroad. I just got back from Switzerland and did about 500 miles training out there. The training is the most important part especially with it being only three months away."

Mr Woodhall is a technical aircraft engineering instructor and left Walsall in 1989 when he joined the RAF.

The group of five will be followed by a support vehicle during their trip. Mr Woodhall added: " I'm in the middle of setting up an online page and I'll be blogging the journey."

His mother Juliet said she was delighted her son had chosen the Samaritans to raise money for. She said: "I'm really thrilled that he's chosen us. It will raise some much-needed funds for the centre which I've worked at for over 21 years." Anyone who would like to sponsor Mr Woodhall can contact him on baggywoody@hotmail.com

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My life-changer

No pain and no more multiple failing teeth | Speech now normal and perfectly clear | Stomach problems over and diet good

WHEN former university mental health lecturer Roy Philpott recognised involuntary changes in his social behaviour, he knew he needed help – and quickly.

"Below the radar," he says, "things were happening to my teeth in my early-60s and by the time I was 70, problems were visible and very acute."

But the issues were not just affecting his oral health.

Studies of the mysterious collaborations between our bodies and minds have established medical links between failing teeth and mental wellbeing.

In Roy's case invasive gum disease had challenged his enthusiastic approach to retirement and not least his passion in working for the Guide Dogs charity.

A public speaker for the charity, he became aware of a "terrible self-consciousness" doing fundraising events.

Symptoms masked

"My normally clear speaking voice began to change and people were asking me to repeat what I'd said. On reflection, I was probably mumbling. Another strange thing for me was that I'd noticed I no longer smiled," he says.

During a period of three years he suffered numerous gum infections as the insidious disease saw him lose more and more teeth. "I'm a Black Country lad and typically Black Country folk cope and get on with things and that's just what I did," he adds.

When antibiotics failed to work he turned to alternative therapies and for a couple of years herbal prescriptions appeared to help.

However, in 2010, Roy recalls what he describes as a "turning point" in a downwards spiral that ultimately affected his ability to eat properly, his digestive system and social engagement. On holiday in Scotland, Roy developed Bell's palsy, a partial paralysis of the face."Treatment involved the prescription of steroids," he explains.

"Suddenly, all the problems with my teeth appeared to disappear, but of course what really was happening, symptoms were being masked by the medication and the infection was still in the roots of my teeth. I thought it had gone, but it hadn't."

In less than a decade, Roy had lost more than 16 teeth and his diet had changed dramatically. Embarrassing gaps meant he was able to chew on only one side and his healthy vegetarian diet, including his favourite apples, celery and grapes, was limited to soft food choices.

"My gums hurt, food impacted between my remaining teeth resulting in sideward pressure and more loosening, and I had to make conscious decisions not to stay in.

"There was no Pizza Hut for me and even a simple piece of toast I had to cut into small pieces. I was no longer really chewing food, just swallowing it and was experiencing stomach problems.

"I'd be chewing and a tooth would just fall out . . . I was not sleeping, had a partial denture I couldn't get on with and all I could think of was 'what on earth am I going to do?' I was desperate," he says.

Roy with his beloved Vonnie – the adopted labradoodle

Secure

Inspired by testimonials published in his local weekly newspaper, he sought help with Steven Burchell DipCDT RCS(Eng), principal of both North Street Dental and Implant Clinic and the Denture Clinic. "What an eye-opener!

"He spent an hour with me on my first consultation," says Roy. Treatment involved the placing of four upper and four lower implants to secure over-dentures.

"Totally secure, hugely functional and natural looking – we were able to help Roy return to the spontaneous lifestyle he enjoyed before his troubles set in," says Steven.

Predictably reassuring

Roy's patient journey

My experience with Steven and his team was the best and getting the implants is money well spent. You need to be committed to the process, but the end results are well worth it.

– Roy Philpott

Other testimonials

Steven's demeanour and attitude to it all gave me the confidence and assurance that they could resolve my problem. Knowing that Owain was going to do the surgery was great.

– Norma Aston

When I first saw my teeth I thought they looked just like my real teeth. My husband couldn't believe they were so good. From start to finish it took 14 weeks, but it was worth the wait.

– Viki Ball

Life with Guide Dogs

GUIDE Dogs puppy walkers Roy and wife, Sue, are committed to changing lives in their work for the charity.

For more than seven years they have been the "the foster parents" of puppies which later became fully trained guidedogs. Currently, the couple from Dudley, have a beautiful labradoodle – Vonnie – the "diva of the house," says Sue.

Vonnie, who suffered retina damage in an accident, had her guidedog career cut short, but was adopted by the Philpotts. Roy and Sue were family to Dudley, the celebrity labrador puppy who was sponsored by the mayor's charity. The practice has also supported Guide Dogs.

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More cash for treatment of diabetes with £1.2m boost

AN extra £1.2million will be ploughed into treatment for people with diabetes in the next two years.

Thanks to two successful bids, Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust is set to double its diabetes nurse specialists as well as speed up the process of patients seen by a multi-disciplinary foot team.

Bosses have vowed the investment will not only improve people's experience but also reduce their length of stay in the Manor Hospital, freeing up vital space for other patients.

The borough has the third highest prevalence of diabetes in the country.

At any one time more than one in five patients at the Manor (22 per cent) are diabetic.

The money has come from NHS England's Diabetes Transformation Fund, worth £44m in total, to target care for those with Type 1 and 2 diabetes.

Colleagues

Dr Noushad Padinjakara, the trust's clinical director for long term conditions, said: "We worked in partnership with our colleagues in podiatry, Public Health Walsall, Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group, Diabetes UK and a consultant from a neighbouring trust and competition was strong as so many healthcare colleagues were hoping to be successful in their bids.

"The fact that our bid was successful is a real vote of confidence in Walsall and it is a huge boost for our staff and our patients."

Dr Krishnasamy Senthil-Kumar, consultant who leads the multi-disciplinary foot team, added: "To receive more than £1m of investment over a two-year period for in-patient diabetes nursing and foot care will make such a difference to the care we can deliver for our patients.

"It is fantastic that we can double our diabetic nurse specialists to four as the demand is definitely there."

Amir Khan, the trust's Medical Director said: "I would like to congratulate everyone who has played an invaluable role in bringing this significant investment to our borough."

Bully with the sign next to the pitch at Oak Park Active Living Centre

Councillor Longhi and Steve Bull

Councillor Sean Coughlan and Steve Bull with pupils from St John's primary

Bully watches some of the youngster being put through their paces

Bully signs one of the fan's tabards

Steve shows some of the silky skills which led to his successful career

Bully pitches in for opening

WOLVES legend Steve Bull has officially opened a state-of-the-art artificial football pitch.

The brand new floodlit 3G artificial grass pitch will provide a home for Walsall Wood Saints JFC – who previously played and trained at four different venues across the region.

The club, formerly known as Shire Oak Saints JFC, has teams ranging from under six to under 18 level and recently merged with Walsall Wood FC. This merger, coupled with the opening of the all-weather pitch, has seen overall team numbers grow to 28.

The new pitch at Oak Park Active Living Centre in Coppice Road, Walsall, is already hosting competitive matches for Walsall College, the Staffordshire Veterans League and Rushall Olympic of the Junior Premier League. Tipton-born Steve Bull MBE, who scored 306 goals for Wolves during his 13 years with the club, and represented England at the 1990 World Cup, said: "This is a brilliant new facility that will benefit the local area as a whole. I know how important grassroots football is and the money from the Premier League, The FA and the Government, delivered by the Football Foundation, is vital to the sport.

"Sites like this 3G AGP help all members of a community to experience the benefits of sport, and I can see that this one will be getting a lot of use!

"Without the funding from the Premier League & The FA Facilities Fund, this stunning all-weather pitch would not have been possible. Well done to Walsall Council for their hard work in securing this grant."

Several other grassroots clubs are also using the new pitch including Brownhills Colts; Pelsall Villa Colts and ASP Victoria. From September 2017, the Walsall Junior Youth League will be using the pitch as a centre for their 5v5 and 7v7 matches.

The project has already forged links with the Albion Foundation, the charitable arm of Premier League side West Bromwich Albion, who are delivering their Baggies Soccer Centre on Saturday mornings. This initiative provides local youngsters with a pathway into Walsall Wood Saints JFC's Under-6 and Under-7 teams.

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How the crash was reported in the Express & Star on May 18, 1945, with a horrific picture showing the extent of the damage

A Lancaster bomber, which was a regular sight in the skies during the war, although the tragic accident, which killed seven people, came just nine days after VE Day

Gordon Rabbetts, Vincent Southworth, John Sills, Reginald Smith, Bernard Hall and Victor Meade were all killed in the crash

The pub, which is now called The Lancaster, when it was The Albion, situated in Lichfield Road, Wednesfield

Pub's tribute to airmen killed in wartime crash

A PUB in Wolverhampton is to change its name in tribute to seven airmen killed in a horror air crash in the city – just days after the end of the Second World War was declared.

The Albion pub in Wednesfield has been closed for a complete revamp and reopened on Wednesday under its new name, The Lancaster, recalling the crash of a bomber plane nearby which saw all on board perish.

The Lancaster had been on a routine flight when it began losing altitude and crashed on Lichfield Road on May 17, 1945. The tragic accident, just nine days after VE Day, left a five-foot crater with wreckage spread over two miles. The airmen on board, none of whom were over 24, are thought to be the only servicemen killed in Wolverhampton during the Second World War. After the crash, the wreckage

MEMORY LANE

By Marion Brennan

and remains of the crew, all from East Kirkby, Lincolnshire, were bulldozed into the crater and a local minister performed a simple funeral ceremony.

Some regulars have questioned the name change on Facebook. One said: "It will always be known as the Albion. Even years ago when it changed to the Harvester, people still called it the Albion."

Remembrance

On the 70th anniversary of the crash two years ago, the Wednesfield Historical Society and the town's St Thomas's Church organised a remembrance service. A campaign was also launched to secure funding for a permanent memorial at the site

The names of the airmen that died were Ronnie O'Donnell, John Sills, Bernard Hall, Victor Meade, Gordon Rabbetts, Reginald Smith and Vincent Southworth. The bomber came from Lincolnshire on a routine training flight before it crashed to the ground. The Express & Star covered the crash with eyewitness accounts of the crash and a picture showing firefighters spraying water into the smouldering crater.

In the article, Express & Star driver Joe Castree said: "It passed right over me and there seemed to be two explosions in the air before the crash.

"I ran to the spot immediately but it was impossible for me to do anything as there was just a lot of wreckage scattered over a wide area and no signs of any members of the crew.

"Bullets were exploding and flares were going off."

Another eye witness believed the crew may have sacrificed their lives to avoid killing children playing on the King George playing field, where the plane could have landed.

As the Lancaster went down four bricklayers on the road some distance away were blown to the ground and had to be treated for shock.

Ronald O'Donnell, one of the crew members killed – none of whom were aged older than 24

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Comedy tonight? It aunt half at rep

Garry Cooper-Stanton as Fancourt Babberley with Francis Quinn as Charley, left, and George Clayton as Jack, right

OLDBURY Rep's final production of this season is the evergreen comedy, 'Charley's Aunt' by Brandon

Thomas. Jack Chesney loves Kitty Verdun and Charley loves Miss Amy Spettigue. The visit of Charley's wealthy aunt from Brazil, "where the nuts come from", gives the pair an excuse to invite the ladies over for tea to meet her!

Cancelling her visit at the last minute, the millionaire aunt sends the boys into cataclysmic confusion. What do they do now? The problem is solved by drafting their feckless Oxford undergrad pal, Fancourt Babberley, into a black satin skirt, bloomers and wig and posing as the widowed millionaires.

Things become even more complicated when Jack's father and Amy's uncle arrive. Both men take a keen interest in Charley's Aunt and when the real aunt turns up, classic comic confusion ensues. Comical farce at it's very best.

The production runs from Saturday July 8 to 15 and performances start at 7.30pm. Tickets can be obtained by phone or in person from the box office on Monday evenings from 7.30pm, and on the Friday prior to opening night from 7.30pm, and every night of the production from 7.00pm.

Tickets are priced at £10 with the usual concessions at £9 with a special price on Monday and Tuesday evenings of £8 (no concessions) box office can be contacted on 0121 552 2761. And you can now book online at www.oldburyrep.org

The Rep's summer screenings continue on June 30 with the BAFTA Award winning film Lion and on July 28 Natalie Portman stars as Jackie Kennedy in the acclaimed biopic Jackie. All tickets are still just £4 and the performance starts at 7.30pm

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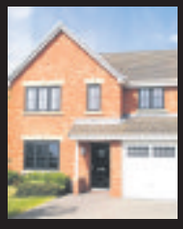

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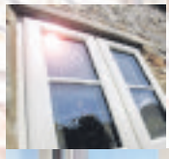

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Celebrating 50 years of Gardeners' World on TV

IT started as a seed of an idea when colour TV was coming in and gardening was considered a fantastic subject for it - and has gone on to produce vast harvests of information for gardeners worldwide.

Now, Gardeners' World is celebrating its 50th year. It held anniversary events at BBC Gardeners' World Live at Birmingham's NEC over four days last weekend, and there's a special feature in this month's edition of Gardeners' World magazine – but the celebrations will no doubt continue long after that.

The BBC Two show has grown to become a mainstay of British gardening TV, capturing on camera how trends have changed over the years, from formal bedding of the 1960s and 1970s, to naturalistic planting and wildlife-friendly spaces of the 1980s, outdoor rooms and decking of the 1990s, robotic mowers and "grow your own" resurgence of the 2000s, to the climate change-conscious, wildlife-friendly plantings for smaller spaces in recent years.

"Over the last 50 years, Gardeners' World has reflected the changes in society at large – it's gone from being presented by Percy Thrower (pictured) in a shirt and tie, to Monty Don's much more relaxed attire. It's changed the advice it gives in line with current thinking and research – no more chemical solutions for example, now it's all about working with nature rather than against it," says Paolo Pronto, executive producer of the show.

"The production process has changed radically. It used to be shot by a huge team with large TV trucks full of heavy machinery, who stopped for a proper sit-down lunch hosted by Percy. Nowadays, a small team using the very latest technology deliver stunning photography with an array of high-tech equipment that would have left the original production team baffled.

"But despite the changes in technology, the clothes and attitude to chemicals, at its core Gardeners' World still does what it set out to do 50 years ago and that is to celebrate gardens and plants, and to inspire people to go outside, get in the garden and have a go."

GARDENERS' WORLD: A POTTED HISTORY

1968-76: Percy Thrower: Organised bedding schemes were his forte.

1976-79: Arthur Billitt: Large vegetable beds represented Arthur's practical style.

1979-1996: Geoff Hamilton: The first presenter to begin to garden organically. He shared trial and error methods with viewers.

1996-2002: Alan Titchmarsh: Alan showed the worth of ornamental grasses and a rich colour palette of perennials.

2003-2008: Monty Don: He brought informal planting and a relaxed style for long borders to the fore.

2008-10: Toby Buckland: Toby transformed an uninspiring field into a garden buzzing with life. But novelty ideas such as 30-minute makeovers didn't inspire viewers. This new style was axed at the end of 2010.

2011-present: Monty returned after recovering from a stroke and the programme moved to his own garden at Longmeadow, Herefordshire.

PRESENTERS' REFLECTIONS

:: Monty Don

On Geoff Hamilton: "Geoff Hamilton was my first recollection of Gardeners' World. Geoff was an inspirational figure for me. I liked the way he was organic, the fact he took issue over the limestone pavements and peat debate. As a public figure, I think he was very brave. Everything you do is scrutinised and so to stand up and say something like he did was very brave. I think he saw organics as a personal journey and he was evangelical about it... and for quite a long time, he'd give you both options."

On Barnsdale Gardens, created by Geoff Hamilton in Rutland for Gardeners' World: "If you look at a plan of Barnsdale it looks all wrong. No garden designer would ever have designed that. But when you go there, it feels right. And I think that's because it's all about Geoff Hamilton. The man absolutely enthuses the place and actually all great gardens, all good gardens, come down to individuals."

:: Alan Titchmarsh

On Percy Thrower: "Percy was the first identifiable icon and it is impossible to say, to convey, how big he was."

On taking over from Geoff Hamilton: "I remember the letter that came in: 'Dear Mr Titchmarsh, when you took over from Geoff Hamilton my heart sank... I've been watching you these past few months... you'll do.' The nicest thing anybody's ever written to me."

The six-acre garden at Pant Hall near Presteigne will open to visitors on Saturday

Take in pretty six-acre garden for a good cause

A PICTURESQUE six-acre garden will open to visitors on one of the longest days of the year on Saturday (June 24).

Pant Hall near Presteigne is the latest in the open gardens programme that will open to raise money for St Michael's Hospice in Hereford.

The land is the work of Malcolm Temple and Karen Roberts and it will open between 2pm and 5pm.

"It's a lot of work but the garden's looking really good," said Malcolm.

"It's daunting and exciting at the same time."

Half an acre at Pant Hall is devoted to lavender borders, a rose bank, terraced lawns and shrubberies leading down to a bog garden.

Over a brook, visitors will find a birch grove, wave garden and orchard terraces to enjoy.

Beyond this is a new three-acre woodland, planted between avenues and a central meadow.

"Opening your garden is a huge challenge," added Malcolm.

"But it helps focus your energies to getting things done. It is really enjoyable to be part of and to allow people to see your garden."

There is limited parking so car sharing is encouraged.

Admission is £4 for adults and free for children under 12.

Assistance dogs only.

For further details, including directions to the venue, visit www.st-michaels-hospice.org.uk

Not too late to plant your summer pots – just yet

A pot-bound plant is something gardeners should seek to avoid

Feed should be added to the compost to keep it going through summer and beyond

Line pots with grit and polystyrene to help drainage

Small trailing plants can be added to fill in the edges of the pot

Make sure newly-planted pots are well watered

Report by Hannah Stephenson

SO, summer's here and you've left it late to get your summer patio plants in their pots, ready to add some colour to your outdoor space.

Don't despair, because leaving it late can have its advantages. You're likely to get bedding bargains in garden centres keen to sell off their summer annuals and you'll still be able to enjoy pots of colour throughout July and August and even into September if you look after them and choose wisely.

Late-summer blooms such as dahlias and lilies can help make summer containers last into autumn, so consider putting a few of them in to prolong your season.

Here's our step-by-step guide to planting up some summer colour for your patio, even if it's late in the season...

CHECK ANNUALS AREN'T POT-BOUND

When choosing bedding, try to avoid plants which have loads of roots sticking out of the bottom of the pot, which indicate the plants have been in there for far too long and can make it tricky to remove the plants from their containers.

MAKE SURE PLANTS HAVE GOOD DRAINAGE

Line the base of pots with drainage holes with crocks (bits of broken pot) or some other material, which will allow free drainage because most patio plants won't enjoy sitting in water and wet roots. I usually use the polystyrene I bought the bedding plants in because it's lighter than crocks if you are going to be moving the pots around. Then fill the pot with multi-purpose compost to around three-quarters full, adding water-retaining crystals to the mix.

STRUCTURE YOUR DISPLAY

Put your main plant in first, which should be taller than the trailers which go around it and will spill over the side of the pot. The tall plant will form the framework for the rest of the display. Firm it in with more compost. Fill around the edges with smaller plants such as trailing lobelia, bacopa and verbena, adding compost as you go. Often people will use a miniature conifer as the tall aspect of the display, but you can just as easily use upright geraniums or osteospermums in smaller containers or more exotic plants like spiky cordylines or exotic-looking cannas if you have bigger pots.

FEED YOUR PLANTS

Add granular feed to the compost mix which should keep it going through summer and beyond – there are many formulas on the market, which help reduce the need for feeding the plant with liquid feed throughout the summer. Many composts also contain water-retaining and feeding elements.

KEEP THEM WELL WATERED

Water newly-planted plants in well. If it's dry, you will need to water the plants every day and in prolonged dry spells, twice a day. Do it early morning or at dusk to reduce evaporation. Remember that the smaller the pot you use, the more watering the plants will need because there will be limited compost to retain moisture. Go for the largest pots you hav.

You're not too late for colour – but don't delay any longer.

Nursery marks its first year with party

A NURSERY near Willenhall celebrated its first birthday with a stay and play party after receiving the green light to offer 30 hours free childcare for three and four year olds from September.

The Ashmore Park Play Hub nursery will be offering their local community a helping hand with the service as part of the Government's childcare initiative, as well as some flexible options for new and existing parents.

The local nursery has flourished despite the current financial climate and bosses wanted to show their appreciation for their support with the party which took place earlier this month.

A spokesman said: "We have recognised and embraced the need in the area to support the government strategy creating a much needed childcare option for parents needed to return to work. We have a vision to make a difference to the residents of Ashmore Park."

To find out more visit (Facebook: Ashmore Playhub).

New shops set for arcade after £100k investment

The Scott Arms shopping parade in Great Barr

THE operator of a shopping parade has pumped £100,000 in a major revamp and signed up a pair of new tenants.

Work will now start to convert shop units at Scott Arms in Great Barr to accommodate them later this year.

It follows owner LCP's introduction of 90-minute free car parking at the parade. Dignity, one of the bigger chains of funeral businesses in the country, and an unnamed nationwide takeaway and delivery chain have both signed tenancy agreements at Scott Arms, which is managed by LCP. A third high street name, which is not yet being named, is also under offer.

LCP is a major property investment group with retail and industrial sites across the Black Country. It is based on Kingswinford's Pensnett Estate, which it also owns.

The company's retail portfolio manager, Jo Salmon, said the Scott Arms deals gathered pace after LCP decided to introduce free parking for 90 minutes at the shopping parade in January. LCP has also spent £100,000 carrying out a reconfiguration of the existing space to attract the new retailers to the scheme. Dignity has signed a 10-year lease for a 1,400 sq ft unit, while the takeaway and delivery chain has agreed a 20-year lease for a 2,066 sq ft unit, which will also have seating for customers.

"We are very pleased to have signed up these two new tenants to Scott Arms," said Jo.

LCP says is planning further improvements at Scott Arms, including a car park extension, upgraded landscaping and common parts, plus new signage. Other occupiers include Iceland, Greggs, Well Pharmacy and Ladbrokes.

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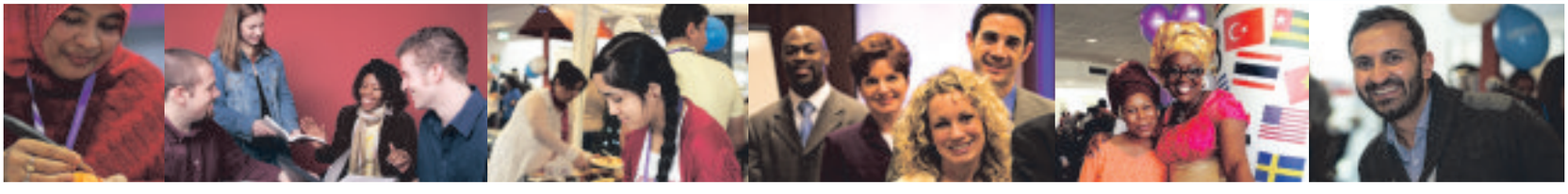

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The Ticket

EASTENDER JOHN'S RACY NEW ROLE

INSIDE

THEATRE + MUSIC + PUZZLES + TV GUIDE

Offering a warm welcome

Managers Paul and Carol always ensure a warm welcome to customers both old and new at Blackheath's Shoulder of Mutton pub.

For all the sports fans they boast three large TV screens featuring all sports on Sky, BT and all BOX OFFICE Events not to mention AT THE RACES.

For those who like 'doing' rather than 'watching', there is the availability of the pool table and dart board.

Loyalty

The pub itself boasts a wide range of ciders, lagers, wines and spirits including four 'Real Ales' which they rotate weekly. Regulars very often enjoy ales such as Bathams, AJ Ales, Oakham, JHB, Stairway To Heaven and MA Pardoes Entire, plus many more!

The pub also run a loyalty scheme which means customers can get 10p back on their card for every pound they spend.

A pub spokesman added: "With a juke box and free WIFI to compliment the regular entertainment every Friday, customers cannot ask for much more from a local pub!"

It's A Little More Mascara for John

He's thrilled that the new touring production of hit musical La Cage aux Folles will land in Wolverhampton from Tuesday.

EastEnders star John John had a great time when he visited Birmingham recently, as the show featured in the city's Gay Village. Because the lavish new production about a drag artiste in a vibrant St Tropez nightclub is a tale of inclusivity.

John says: "The message is that you can be whoever you want to be, no matter what race, religion or sexuality you are. We all have to learn to accept, celebrate, acknowledge and respect each other's differences. We need to realise that we're all individuals living together, so we have to get along."

Bill Kenwright's La Cage aux Folles is a glitzy, high-kicking, feather-trimmed joy starring John and Adrian Zmed. It will feature at Wolverhampton's Grand until July 1.

George and the dazzling drag artiste Albin, otherwise known as Za Za and the star of La Cage aux Folles, live an idyllic existence in the heart of St Tropez. But behind the curtains of this sparkling extravaganza, all may be about to change.

Georges' son Jean-Michel announces his engagement to the daughter of a notorious right-wing politician determined to close down the local colourful night-life. Drama and hilarity ensue when a meeting of the parents forces them to cover up their vibrant lifestyle. Will Albin be able to play the role of his life to ensure that Jean-Michel can marry his love?

The production stars West End hero John, whose extensive theatre credits include the West End productions of A Chorus Line at the London Palladium, Cats, Starlight Express and Chicago. He also played the loveable Christian in BBC's EastEnders.

Alongside him is Broadway star Adrian, whose credits include Blood Brothers, Grease and Falsettos. On television he played Officer Vince Romano alongside William Shatner in the long running hit series T.J. Hooker and big screen credits include Johnny in Grease 2.

Joining them is West End icon, Marti Webb. She received huge critical acclaim for Tell Me on a Sunday, a show specifically written for her by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Don Black.

John has spent a lifetime preparing for such roles, having left school for Cats as a teenager.

"Leaving school for Cats when I was 16 really wasn't a big decision. I'd trained for it all my life. I'd been away at boarding school, the Royal Ballet School, since I was nine years old, and by 16 I was ready to go.

"During that first year of touring, my father passed away. I had to deal with a lot personally and I also grew up a lot. Thinking back on it now, it was quite extraordinary, but at the time, when you're 16, you don't give it much attention. It doesn't seem unusual or dangerous or out of the ordinary."

That production remains dear to John and he has the fondest memories of it: "Cats is dear to me because it's the only time my father has seen me perform. The show will always have a special place in my heart for that reason, but it was also a place I spent a lot of my youth. Things got very comfortable and very familiar. It never felt like going to work, it felt like going home."

Love story – John stars alongside Broadway star Adrian Zmed

And yet despite getting such a good start to his career, John had to work hard to make a go of things. While he landed on his feet in Cats, he had to repeat the feat again and again and again, until he was established.

"It's easy to get your first job, but it's really about getting your fifth and your sixth and so on. It's about keeping it going. Being able to take the rejections, the criticisms, the good reviews, the bad reviews . . . that's what gets difficult. In many ways, one of the things I'm most proud of is that I've stuck it out and endured it."

He's doing so at present following the death of his mother. John had appeared on Celebrity Big Brother to raise funds for her care, which cost £45,000 per year. However, his mum, Bridget, died in April after being diagnosed with dementia and Alzheimer's in 2010. John tried to care for her as long as he could and she moved in with him for a while.

"Then, when we as a family felt we were not equipped medically to deal with her condition – my sister and I both work – we had to find her a placement.

"The only place we felt was fitting for her cost that amount of money and we saw a lot of places."

He said: "My mum passed away with zero in her bank account. Zero. I wish she had enjoyed the money. She saved for the wrong things, she saved for her family.

"My mum worked so hard every day of her life and what she had was to leave, not to us necessarily, but to her grandchildren, and that was all she had.

"People now say things like, 'There are positive ways to live with dementia'. You name me one. Because as far as I can see, there is nothing positive to having Alzheimer's or dementia.

"It is brutal and it is cruel and I have nothing good to say about it."

> *It's easy to get your first job, but it's really about getting your fifth job . . .*

La Cage aux Folles is a joyous production. The original 1983 Broadway production received nine nominations for Tony Awards and won six, including Best Musical, Best Score and Best Book. The success of the musical spawned a West End production and several international runs.

The 2004 Broadway revival won the Tony Award for Best Revival, and the 2008 London revival garnered the Laurence Olivier Award for Best Musical Revival. The 2010 Broadway revival was nominated for eleven Tony Awards, winning the Tony Award for Best Revival of a Musical.

It has toured around the world, with productions in Australia, Germany, Colombia, Mexico, Estonia, Spain, Portugal, Holland, Korea, Denmark, Panama, Puerto Rica, Swede and the Philippines.

John is happy simply to be a part of it: "Thinking about La Cage aux Folles makes me quite emotional. We've had a standing ovation every night. I've just come off a sell-out tour of Chicago and we very rarely had a standing ovation. This is the kind of show that compels people to get on their feet. The book [by Harvey Fierstein] is a gift, there isn't a word out of place. To be able to stand onstage every night and sing "I Am What I Am" is really life-affirming.

"It's a riot from start to finish. Gary McCann has done an amazing job with our set – it looks like the inside of a jewellery box. My costumes are sensational – I have 14 changes in the first half alone. Albin has been played by some legends before me, and it's not something I take on lightly. I'm from Manchester and I decided to play him as a northerner. It feels very familiar to me, and I feel very comfortable in his shoes because of that."

● **For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.**

A scene from Die Fledermaus

WNO take audience back to seductive old Vienna

Welsh National Opera return to Birmingham Hippodrome next week to offer a taste of one of music's most seductive destinations, Vienna, with a celebration of the city's musical culture and style.

The season includes a new production of Richard Strauss's sumptuous comedy Der Rosenkavalier, and a revival of John Copley's opulent, traditional production of Die Fledermaus by Johann Strauss II. Alongside these are performances of WNO's classic production of Puccini's Madam Butterfly.

WNO's new music director, Tomáš Hanus, will conduct both Die Fledermaus, performed on Wednesday, and Der Rosenkavalier, performed on Saturday, July 1.

Directed by Olivia Fuchs with design by Niki Turner, the new production of Der Rosenkavalier will take audiences on a passionate journey to 1911 Vienna. Celebrated soprano Rebecca Evans will be making a role debut in the iconic role of The Marschallin. The revival of Die Fledermaus will also transport audiences to early 1900s Vienna in a production that revels in frivolity and fancy frocks at a masquerade ball.

Completing the trio of operas is Puccini classic Madam Butterfly, on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Joachim Herz's production will be directed by Sarah Crisp and conducted by Andrew Greenwood. Madam Butterfly tells the heartbreaking tale of Cio-Cio-San's love and loss at the hands of her US naval officer, Pinkerton. Linda Richardson returns to share the role of Cio-Cio-San with Judith Howarth. Paul Charles Clarke sings the role of Pinkerton. See birminghamhippodrome.com or call 0844 338 5000.

Dude returns to roll away the years

As leader of 1970s British rock legends Mott The Hoople, Ian Hunter is widely revered as one of rock 'n' roll's most compelling performers and most articulate songwriters.

As author of such anthems as All The Way From Memphis and the voice of such landmark albums as All The Young Dudes, he remains a hero to fellow musicians and fans around the world. He is bringing his Rant Band for a concert at Birmingham Town Hall on Sunday.

Hunter, pictured, joined Mott The Hoople in 1969. With Mott, he had recorded four albums – Mott The Hoople, Mad Shadows, Wildlife and Brain Capers by the time they hit international stardom with the glam rock anthem, the David Bowie penned All The Young Dudes.

The band's success continued with Mott and The Hoople, between them containing the hits All The Way From Memphis, Honaloochie Boogie, Roll Away The Stone and The Golden Age Of Rock 'n' Roll.

Mott disbanded in 1974 and Ian moved to New York, starting a celebrated solo career. The albums Ian Hunter, All American Alien Boy, Overnight Angels, You're Never Alone With A Schizophrenic, Short Back 'n' Sides and All Of The Good Ones Are Taken.

Barry Manilow took one of Ian's most personal songs, Ships into the charts .

Ian took time out to produce in the '80's, returning in 1993, since then Ian has produced what some critics feel to be his best work , The Artful Dodger, Rant, Shrunken Heads, Man Overboard and When I'm President.

Mott The Hoople have reformed twice and Hunter played two successful tours with them. But, whilst proud of his past achievements, he would prefer to focus on the future. Hunter said: "For the first 15 years of my life, I had no idea what I was here for. But then Elvis came out and it was, 'Oh, that's what I am here for'.

"Rock 'n' roll gave me a great life and I don't know what I would have done without it. It's all I know."

Mirga takes the baton for opera

Acclaimed young Lithuanian conductor and Music Director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Mirga Gražinyte-Tyla, pictured, will be holding the baton when Mozart opera Idemeneo is performed at Symphony Hall, Birmingham, at 5pm on Saturday.

English tenor Jeremy Ovenden will be in the title role as the King of Crete in a story from ancient Greece. Sung in Italian with English surtitles, the three hour performance will include two intervals.

Old and young punk rockers in action

Pick of the gigs include punk veterans Dead Kennedys at Birmingham's O2 Academy on Monday, and controversial young punks Cabbage across the city at Digbeth's O2 Institute tomorrow (Friday).

Joy Division are one of the infuences on Birmingham band Semantics, who top a four band bill in a home town gig at the Sunflower Lounge on Saturday.

Former W.A.S.P guitarist Chris Holmes brings his band Mean Man to the Robin 2 in Bilston on Tuesday, and on Wednesday Ritchie Blackmore's Rainbow are at the Genting Arena.

Wolverhampton's Slade Rooms next weekend hosts local metal band Our World Below, topping a five band bill on Friday, July 1. Up-and-coming country music duo American Young bring a flavour of modern Nashville to the Slade Rooms on July 2.

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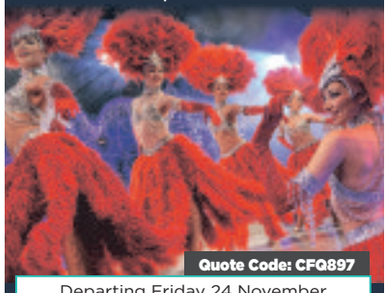

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SATURDAY'S TV JUNE 24

CHOICE

Stephen Fry

Britain's Great Gay Buildings (Channel 4, 8pm)

Stephen Fry is joined by seven fellow celebrities to mark the 50th anniversary of the 1967 Sexual Offences Act, which decriminalised private homosexual acts between men. The group explores the histories of several buildings that became cornerstones in the battle for gay rights in the UK. The Rev Richard Coles revisits the hedonistic past of London's Heaven Nightclub, while Mary Portas visits Shibden Hall near Halifax to celebrate the life of 19th-century lesbian heiress Anne Lister. Craig Revel Horwood investigates Britain's drag scene at the Royal Vauxhall Tavern, and Simon Callow tells the story of Oscar Wilde's downfall at the Old Bailey. Plus, Rikki Beadle-Blair visit the Theatre Royal Haymarket.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Food & Drink. (R) **12.00** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Tennis: Queen's. The AEGON Championships. **5.35** BBC News. **5.45** Regional Programme. **5.55** Pointless Celebrities. (R)

6.45 Doctor Who. Friendship drives the Doctor to make the rashest decision of his many lives when, trapped on board a giant spaceship, caught in the event horizon of a black hole, he witnesses the death of someone he pledged to protect. For a man well-accustomed to bending the laws of time to his advantage, now every passing second seems to be leading to an awful loss beyond even his control. However, he remains determined to overcome the odds and redeem his mistake, but prevailing against time itself could be one battle too many for the Time Lord.

7.30 Pitch Battle. The choral music contest continues, as Mel Giedroyc gives another diverse selection of choirs a chance to compete in head-to-head knock-out challenges. The groups will be asked to demonstrate their signature style with a "showstopper" performance, before moving on to test their mettle in a "riff-off" that sees them competing opposite a rival outfit. Another guest adjudicator takes a seat on the panel, to help resident judges Gareth Malone and Kelis to deliver their expert opinions on each performance.

9.00 Casualty. Alicia's concerns about Ethan escalate when she discovers he hasn't been sleeping, and has instead been keeping watch outside of Scott Ellisson's flat. Elsewhere, Iain and Lily begin the day with a spring in their step after their night together, but cracks begin to show in their blossoming relationship when they disagree over how to deal with an elderly couple hospitalised following a botched suicide pact. Plus, sparks fly between Connie and Sam.

9.50 Mrs Brown's Boys. Cathy goes to extreme lengths to impress her psychologist boyfriend. (R)

10.20 BBC News; Weather.; National Lottery Update.

10.40 Film: The Proposal. (2009)

12.25 Weather for the Week Ahead.

12.30 BBC News.

BBC2

6.40 Film: Love Affair. (1939) Romantic drama, starring Charles Boyer and Irene Dunne. **8.05 Film:** Odette. (1950) The French widow of an English soldier becomes a British spy during the Nazi occupation of her country. Fact-based Second World War drama, starring Anna Neagle and Trevor Howard. **10.00** Monty Halls' Great Irish Escape. (R) **11.00** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **12.00** Great British Menu. (R) **12.30** Great British Menu. (R) **1.00 Film:** Splash! (1984) A mermaid falls for a New Yorker she saved from drowning and assumes human form so she can follow him onto dry land. Romantic fantasy comedy, starring Tom Hanks and Daryl Hannah. **2.45** Escape to the Country. (R) **3.30** Gardeners' World. (R) **4.30** Flog It! (R) **5.30** Glastonbury 2017.

7.00 Supercharged Otters: Natural World. Cameraman Charlie Hamilton James has been captivated by otters for the last 25 years and has filmed them more than anyone else. Now, through the eyes of three river orphaned otters, he sets out to reveal their survival secrets and exactly why he believes these creatures are so special. (R)

8.00 Glastonbury 2017. Clara Amfo and Nick Grimshaw present highlights from the Pyramid Stage, where pop starlet Katy Perry makes her debut Glastonbury appearance today. Plus, the best performances from across the festival ground throughout the second day, and another selection of bespoke acoustic music.

9.00 Glastonbury 2017. Clara Amfo and Jo Whiley present live, uninterrupted coverage of this evening's headline set by Foo Fighters. Fans and attendees will both be hoping frontman Dave Grohl will be taking good care of himself before travelling to Worthy Farm this weekend; he and his band were due to perform as a headline act at the 2015 festival, but were forced to pull out after Grohl broke his leg during an on-stage stunt at a concert in Sweden. Beyond the US rockers' set, Lauren Laverne and Huw Stephens will be touring the festival grounds to take in a few more acoustic performances.

1.00 Film: Goodbye First Love. (2011) Romantic drama, with Lola Creton and Sebastian Urzendowsky. **2.45** This Is BBC Two. Preview of upcoming programmes from BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.20** Sooty. (R) **6.30** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.50** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Oddbods. (R) **7.05** Super 4. (R) **7.20** Marvel Avengers Assemble. (R) **7.45** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **8.10** Ben 10. **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** ITV Racing: The Opening Show. **10.25** Judge Rinder. (R) **11.25 Film:** Horrid Henry: The Movie. (2011) **1.15** ITV News; Weather. **1.30** ITV Racing Live: Royal Ascot. Coverage of day five of the prestigious festival.

6.00 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.10 ITV News; Weather.

6.25 Catchphrase: Celebrity Special. New series. Stephen Mulhern returns with the guessing game-show in which three contestants are challenged to figure out which familiar lie behind a series of animated clues. For this opening episode, Stephen is joined by a trio of celebrity contestants; Diversity's Ashley Banjo, Benidorm actor Jake Canuso and TV presenter Lorraine Kelly, who all stay in the game right through to the Super Catchphrase round.

7.30 The Voice Kids. The junior version of the singing talent contest reaches its third round, as Emma Willis invites more youngsters between the ages of eight and 14 to take to the stage and prove their talent. Coaches Will.i.am, Danny Jones and Pixie Lott continue to seek new recruits to fill up their teams, while the kids themselves will have their eyes on the £30,000 prize – and the a family holiday to Disneyland Paris.

9.00 Film: Casino Royale. (2006) James Bond achieves his '00' status and is dispatched on the trail of Le Chiffre, an international criminal financing terrorist organisations around the world. Bond's investigation leads to a casino in Montenegro, where he takes part in a high-stakes poker game in a bid to bankrupt Le Chiffre and put an end to his plans. Spy thriller, directed by Martin Campbell and starring Daniel Craig in his first outing as 007, with Eva Green, Mads Mikkelsen, Judi Dench and Giancarlo Giannini.

11.50 ITV News; Weather.

12.10 The Chase. (R) **1.05** Jackpot247. **3.00** Who's Doing the Dishes? (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.10 Transvulcania Ultra Marathon. **6.35** Motor Sport: Mini Challenge. **7.05** Ironman: Staffordshire. **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.25** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.55** Formula 1 Azerbaijan Grand Prix Practice 3 Live. **12.25** F1 Meets Toto Wolff. **12.55** Formula 1 Azerbaijan Grand Prix Qualifying Live. Coverage from the Baku City Circuit (Start-time 2.00pm). **3.30** World's Most Expensive Cars. **4.35** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) **5.35** Kirstie and Phil's Love It or List It. (R)

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 The Autistic Gardener. Alan Gardner visits Bristol, where Ig, Joe and their three children need some help clearing their 100-foot garden of weeds and waste. With a budget of £15,000, the professional gardener sets out to restore some order to their overgrown, chaotic plot. He also visits the gardens at The Getty Centre in Los Angeles, where he discovers a geometrical layout is the key to the design.

8.00 Britain's Great Gay Buildings. Stephen Fry, Richard Coles, Mary Portas, Craig Revel Horwood, Simon Callow, Rikki Beadle-Blair, Liz Carr and Waheed Alli explore buildings that helped define gay rights in the UK.

9.00 Film: Identity Thief. (2013) A con-woman acquires an executive's credit card numbers, and lives a life of luxury at his expense. The outraged victim sets out on a mission to track down the fraudster and bring her to justice personally – resulting in them travelling on a disastrous road trip across America together. Comedy, with Jason Bateman, Melissa McCarthy, Jon Favreau and Amanda Peet.

11.15 Film: The Purge. (2013) The American government responds to rising crime rates by introducing an annual 12-hour period when all laws are suspended, so the people can get violent impulses out of their system. A family takes shelter at home, but when a stranger turns up asking for help, the mayhem outside soon catches up with them. Horror, starring Lena Headey and Ethan Hawke.

12.50 Ramsay's Hotel Hell. (R) **1.40** Hollyoaks. **3.50** Ackley Bridge. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **10.15** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.50** Animals Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **11.15** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.15** Police Interceptors: Deadly Pursuit. (R) **1.15** The Great British Benefits Handout. (R) **2.15** The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. (R) **3.15** The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door: When Neighbours Attack. (R) **4.10** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away Special. **5.10** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R)

6.05 5 News Weekend.

6.10 Funniest Ever Toddler Tantrums. A collection of comic clips featuring youngsters that have taken the internet by storm, featuring sassy six-year-old Johanna belting out her version of Aretha Franklyn's Respect. (R)

7.00 Blind Date. Paul O'Grady's revival of the dating game show continues, as a former member of the Royal Air Force embarks on a mission to find her very own Prince Charming, and a male swimwear model takes his pick of three single ladies. Plus, Paul catches up with last week's matches to discover whether their first dates were a success.

8.00 Before They Were Stars. Part two of two. Dale Winton revisits another selection of archive clips that immortalised popular celebrities' first, ill-advised forays into the cut-throat world of showbusiness.

9.00 Big Brother. Daily round-up of highlights, revealing how the housemates are getting on under the all-seeing eye of Big Brother, featuring the latest tasks, games, arguments, laughs, diary room visits and bedroom chit-chat. Narrated by Marcus Bentley.

10.05 The Miranda Hart Story. Profile of the comedian, examining her early years performing at the Edinburgh Festival before reaching stardom with her successful sitcom and dramatic role in Call the Midwife. (R)

11.25 Lip Sync Battle UK: Manford v Keegan. Melanie Brown and Professor Green present the musical game show as comedian Jason Manford and actress Michelle Keegan go head to head lip-synching to a hit song. (R)

11.50 Access.

12.00 SuperCasino. **3.10** Gold Digger and Proud. (R) **4.00** House Doctor. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four

7.00 Toots & The Maytals & Liam Gallagher at Glastonbury 2017. The Jamaican musical group's performance earlier this afternoon. **8.00** The National at Glastonbury 2017. The US indie-rockers' performance, live at the Pyramid Stage. **9.00** Father John Misty at Glastonbury 2017. Live coverage of the American singer-songwriter's set this evening. **10.00** The Jacksons at Glastonbury 2017. Live coverage of the popular funk-pop family band's set at the West Holts stage. **11.45** Top of the Pops: 1984 **12.20** Northern Soul: Living for the Weekend **1.20** Classic Soul at the BBC **2.20** Otis Redding: Soul Ambassador **3.20** Close

ITV2

12.00 Take Me Out **1.10** Catchphrase **1.50** You've Been Framed! Goes Wild! **2.50 Film:** Arthur (2011) **3.50** FYI Daily **3.55 Film:** Arthur (2011) **5.00 Film:** Freaky Friday (2003) **6.05** FYI Daily **6.10 Film:** Freaky Friday (2003) **6.55 Film:** Step Up 2: The Streets (2008) **7.55** FYI Daily **8.00 Film:** Step Up 2: The Streets (2008) **9.00** Love Island: The Weekly Hot List **10.00** Celebrity Juice: Halloween Special **10.50** Family Guy **12.20** American Dad! **1.20 Film:** Piranha (2010) **2.20** FYI Daily **2.25 Film:** Piranha (2010) **2.50** Teleshopping **5.50** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3

11.20 Film: Murder on the Orient Express (1974) **12.55** Lewis **2.55** Agatha Christie's Marple **7.00** Midsomer Murders **9.00** Foyle's War **11.00** Law & Order: UK **1.55** On the Buses **2.20** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4

1.45 Film: The Great Outdoors (1988) **2.45** FYI Daily **2.50 Film:** The Great Outdoors (1988) **3.30** Live 2017 FIFA Confederations Cup. **6.15** Football Rivalries **6.30** Storage Wars **6.55** The Sweeney **8.00** River Monsters **9.05 Film:** Jaws 2 (1978) **10.05** FYI Daily **10.10 Film:** Jaws 2 (1978) **11.25 Film:** Jaws 3 (1983) **12.25** FYI Daily **12.30 Film:** Jaws 3 (1983) **1.30** The Football Mavericks **2.25** Tommy Cooper **2.50** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping

E4

12.30 Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **12.45 Film:** Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel (2009) **2.30** The Goldbergs **5.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00 Film:** Fast & Furious 5 (2011) **11.35** Gogglebox **1.45** Tattoo Fixers **2.45** Rude Tube **3.35** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **4.20** How I Met Your Mother **5.00** Rude(ish) Tube

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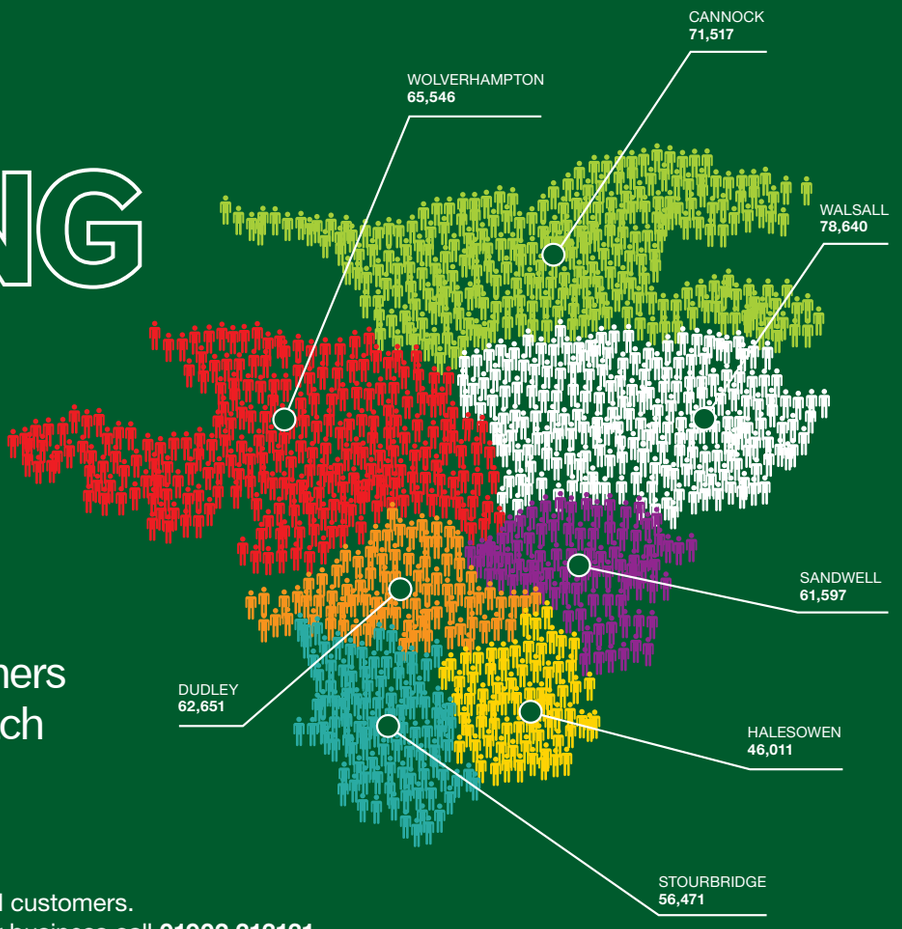

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SUNDAY'S TV JUNE 25

CHOICE

Aidan Turner

Poldark (BBC1, 9pm)
Ross is ordered to leave Roscoff under threat of execution. He travels with Tholly to meet his contact in France, but finds information about Dwight's fate comes at a high price. Sam leads a congregation of methodists in protest outside the church – only to face broken promises from George, who revokes their lease on the meeting house, which leads them to turn to Elizabeth for help. Geoffrey Charles has some words of advice for Drake, who has shared a moment of intimacy on the beach with Morwenna. Aidan Turner, Ellise Chappell, Harry Richardson, Sean Gilder, Tom York, Jack Farthing, Gabriella Wilde, Heida Reed and Harry Marcus star.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Sunday Morning Live. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **2.00** Tennis: Queen's. **5.10** Points of View. **5.25** Songs of Praise.

6.00 Celebrity Mastermind. John Humphrys tests Shappi Khorsandi, Chris Stark, Piers Taylor and Lee Pearson on Charlie Chaplin, Scott Mills, Bob Dylan and British birds. (R)

6.30 BBC News.

6.50 Regional Programme.

7.00 Countryfile. Sean Fletcher reports from Carmarthenshire, where he meets an expert on birds of prey in Carmarthenshire who uses drones designed to look like birds to train falcons to hunt. He takes a look behind the scenes in the workshop where they are built and visits a breeding unit for peregrine falcon chicks. Plus, a selection of reports from the series featuring working animals.

8.00 Antiques Roadshow. The roving team values more decorative objects and rarities belonging to the public.

9.00 Poldark. Ross is ordered to leave Roscoff under threat of execution. He travels with Tholly to meet his contact in France, but finds information about Dwight's fate comes at a high price. Sam leads a congregation of methodists in protest outside the church – only to face broken promises from George, who revokes their lease on the meeting house, which leads them to turn to Elizabeth for help. Geoffrey Charles has some words of advice for Drake, who has shared a moment of intimacy on the beach with Morwenna.

10.00 BBC News.

10.20 Regional Programme.

10.30 Tracey Breaks the News. Tracey Ullman returns with a one-off political and topical offering, filmed close to transmission and broadcast in the aftermath of the general election. (R)

11.00 Live at the Apollo. Leading performers on the stand-up circuit share their light-hearted views on modern life. (R)

11.30 Film: The Spectacular Now. (2013)

1.00 Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.05** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 A to Z of TV Gardening. (R) **6.45** The Instant Gardener. (R) **7.30** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.30** The Beechgrove Garden. **9.00** Countryfile. (R) **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.30** Great British Menu. (R) **12.00** Great British Menu. (R) **12.30** Great British Menu. (R) **1.00** Sailing: America's Cup Highlights. **2.00** Money for Nothing. (R) **2.45** Garden Rescue. (R) **3.15** Escape to the Country. (R) **4.15** Natural World. (R) **5.10** Flog It! (R)

6.00 Glastonbury 2017. Mark Radcliffe and Lauren Laverne present coverage of the afternoon's highlights, including the Bee Gee and classic songwriter Barry Gibb's performance at the Sunday Afternoon Legends slot. Plus, Nile Rodgers and his disco band Chic perform many of their hits at the Pyramid Stage, alongside a selection of acoustic sets from throughout the day, live reports from around the site, and a look forward to the final headliner, pop star Ed Sheeran.

9.00 Glastonbury 2017. Clara Amfo and Huw Stephens present live coverage of global pop star Ed Sheeran's performance at the Pyramid Stage on the third and final night of coverage from the festival at Worthy Farm, marking the singer's debut as a Glastonbury headliner. Following Ed Sheeran's live performance, Jo Whiley, Mark Radcliffe and Huw Stephens take over the presenting reins on the BBC Two sofa and reminisce on the best of the final day of the Festival, looking back at their own personal highlights from across the weekend. Last in the series.

12.00 Film: Up There. (2012) A spirit is given the job of escorting the recently deceased to the afterlife, when all he wants to do is cross over himself. He is partnered with an annoyingly cheerful sidekick for his latest assignment, but they manage to lose the soul in question and face a frantic search through a British seaside town. Comic fantasy, starring Burn Gorman, Kate O'Flynn and Aymen Hamdouchi. **1.15** Sign Zone: Question Time. David Dimbleby chairs the debate from Plymouth, with a panel of politicians and other guests facing topical questions from the audience. (R) **2.15** Holby City. As Jasmine begins to investigate the past, she makes a shocking discovery, while Dom takes a dim view when new friend Lofty appears insensitive. (R) **3.15** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.20** Sooty. (R) **6.30** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.50** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Oddbods. (R) **7.05** Super 4. (R) **7.20** Marvel Avengers Assemble. (R) **7.45** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **8.10** Ben 10. **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** Britain's Best Walks with Julia Bradbury. (R) **10.00** Peston on Sunday. **11.00** Love Your Garden. (R) **12.00** ITV News; Weather. **12.10 Film:** King Ralph. (1991) Comedy, starring John Goodman. **2.00** The Voice Kids. (R) **3.30** Live 2017 FIFA Confederations Cup. Germany v Cameroon (Kick-off 4.00pm).

6.10 ITV News; Weather.

6.20 Film: The Amazing Spider-Man 2. (2014) The websslinging hero battles a powerful new enemy when a downtrodden engineer develops lethal electrical powers, which he unleashes on those he believes have betrayed him. As if that wasn't enough to keep him busy, he faces an even greater threat when he is reunited with an unstable old friend who has been charged with a sinister mission by his dying father, leading to a series of tense confrontations that threaten to change his life for ever. Superhero adventure sequel, starring Andrew Garfield, Emma Stone and Dane DeHaan.

9.00 The Loch. The police hold a press conference to appeal for information about Jonjo, and Smilie hopes to take the opportunity to reassure the public that they have nothing to fear and prevent news of the human heart found by the lake from spreading further. However, his plans are disrupted by Blake, who reveals everything and shares his theory that the community is being terrorised by a serial killer. An unexpected discovery is made outside the village hall during a town meeting set up to try and identify the killer.

10.00 ITV News; Weather.

10.20 Peston on Sunday. Political magazine, presented by Robert Peston. Allegra Stratton presents a guide to the latest issues on social media. (R)

11.15 Lethal Weapon. (R)

12.15 Jackpot247. **3.00** Motorsport UK. **3.50** British Superbike Championship Highlights. **4.40** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.35 3rd Rock from the Sun. (R) **7.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.25** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Frasier. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **8.55** Frasier. (R) **9.25** Eating Well with Hemsley + Hemsley. **10.00** Sunday Brunch. **1.00** Formula 1 Azerbaijan Grand Prix Live Build-Up. Previewing the eighth round of the season. **1.35** Formula 1 Azerbaijan Grand Prix Live. Coverage from the Baku City Circuit (Start-time 2.00pm). **4.10** Formula 1 Azerbaijan Grand Prix Live Reaction. A review of the eighth round of the season. **5.00** Guy Martin: Last Flight of the Vulcan Bomber. (R)

6.35 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Grand Designs. Boat enthusiast James Strangeways invites Kevin McCloud to survey progress on the construction of his new home, which his architect nephew Ben Hebblethwaite has designed to be as "un-houselike" as possible. James has spent the past 35 years travelling the canals and waterways of Britain, and despite never liking houses, has decided now is the time to put down roots on dry land. Ben hoped a home standing on stilts above a marsh, and incorporating ship-like qualities such as a keel-shaped roof, will be enough to satisfy his boat-mad uncle. However, Ben's contractor goes into liquidation a few months into the project, taking £87,000 of the £300,000 budget, and when James decides to make a few tweaks to the design, alarm-bells begin to ring for the young architect. (R)

8.00 Great Canal Journeys: India. Part two of two. Timothy West and Prunella Scales explore the Brahmaputra river, where they follow an old trade route, meet a community of monks and take a ride on an elephant.

9.00 The Handmaid's Tale. Offred receives a surprising proposition from Serena Joy that brings back memories of the unconventional way she met her husband.

10.10 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown. Joe Lycett and Michelle Wolf join regulars Jon Richardson and Sean Lock for the words-and-numbers game, with Adam Riches in Dictionary Corner. (R)

11.15 Film: The Last Days on Mars. (2013) Sci-fi horror.

1.10 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. (R) **2.00** The Last Leg. (R) **2.55** KOTV Boxing Weekly.

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Pip Ahoy! **6.10** Mr Men. (R) **6.20** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.30** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.35** Wissper. (R) **6.40** Paw Patrol. (R) **6.55** Bob the Builder. (R) **7.05** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.20** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.25** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.30** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.40** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.05** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **8.20** Wissper. (R) **8.35** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.50** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.10** Little Princess. (R) **9.25** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.35** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.45** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.55** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **10.10** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.45** The Gadget Show. (R) **11.30** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.30** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.25 Film:** Jack and the Beanstalk. (2010) Fantasy adventure, starring Colin Ford. **3.10 Film:** Did You Hear about the Morgans? (2009) Romantic comedy, starring Hugh Grant and Sarah Jessica Parker. **5.15 Film:** Made of Honor. (2008) Romantic comedy, starring Patrick Dempsey and Michelle Monaghan.

7.00 Cricket on 5. England v South Africa. Action from the third T20 international of the three-match series, which took place at The SSE SWALEC in Cardiff.

8.00 That's So 1994. The events of 1994, when the Church of England ordained its first female priests, the first UK National Lottery draw took place, and the Channel Tunnel opened. (R)

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 Big Brother. Daily round-up of highlights, revealing how the housemates are getting on under the all-seeing eye of Big Brother, featuring the latest tasks, games, arguments, laughs, diary room visits and bedroom chit-chat. Narrated by Marcus Bentley.

10.05 OMG! My Barbie Body. New series. Documentary series about people who have undergone extreme cosmetic surgery, beginning with three women who have tried to turn themselves into Barbie dolls.

11.00 Film: Role Models. (2008) After a brush with the law, two irresponsible men have to look after troubled kids as community service. Comedy, with Paul Rudd, Seann William Scott and Christopher Mintz-Plasse.

1.00 SuperCasino. **3.10** Our Dream Hotel. (R) **4.00** Britain's Greatest Bridges. (R) **4.50** Great Artists. (R) **5.15** Wildlife SOS. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Rag'n'Bone Man and Shaggy at Glastonbury 2017. Coverage of the singers' performances at the festival. **8.00** Special Guests at Glastonbury 2017. Special appearances at the John Peel Stage. **9.00** Operation Crossbow **10.00** Storyville: Russia's Toughest Prison – The Condemned **11.20** Horizon: Antarctica Ice Station Rescue **12.20** The Comet's Tale **1.20** Timeshift: The Golden Age of Coach Travel **2.20** David Attenborough's Zoo Quest in Colour **3.50** Close

ITV2
11.55 The Voice Kids **1.25 Film:** Beethoven's 2nd (1993) **2.25** FYI Daily **2.30 Film:** Beethoven's 2nd (1993) **3.10 Film:** The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas (2000) **4.10** FYI Daily **4.15 Film:** The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas (2000) **5.00 Film:** Flubber (1997) **6.05** FYI Daily **6.10 Film:** Flubber (1997) **6.50 Film:** The Wedding Planner (2001) **7.50** FYI Daily **7.55 Film:** The Wedding Planner (2001) **9.00** Love Island **10.00** Love Island: Aftersun **11.00** Family Guy **12.30** American Dad! **1.30** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.00** Planet's Funniest Animals **2.25** Teleshopping **5.55** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3
11.50 The Darling Buds of May **1.05** Hidden Treasure **3.10** Agatha Christie's Marple **5.15** Foyle's War **7.15** The Road to Coronation Street **9.00** Joanna Lumley's Japan **10.00** Law & Order: UK **12.00** Wire in the Blood **3.35** May the Best House Win **5.15** On the Buses **5.40** ITV3 Nightscreen

ITV4
11.10 Pawn Stars **12.35 Film:** Rio Bravo (1959) **1.35** FYI Daily **1.40 Film:** Rio Bravo (1959) **3.30** Live 2017 FIFA Confederations Cup. Chile v Australia (Kick-off 4.00pm). **6.00** Fierce **7.00** The Chase: Celebrity Special **8.00** River Monsters **9.05 Film:** The Great Train Robbery (1978) **10.10** FYI Daily **10.15 Film:** The Great Train Robbery (1978) **11.20 Film:** The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford (2007) **12.25** FYI Daily **12.30 Film:** The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford (2007) **2.30** Tommy Cooper **3.00** Teleshopping

E4
12.55 Film: Tooth Fairy (2010) **3.00** The Big Bang Theory **8.00** The Crystal Maze: Celebrity Special **9.00** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **10.00 Film:** Underworld: Rise of the Lycans (2009) **11.50** Gogglebox **12.55** Rude Tube **2.00** 8 Out of 10 Cats

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Sunday 25th June 10am-4pm
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PICK OF THE WEEK

FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
Real Murders: An Aurora Teagarden Mystery, Channel 5, 3.20pm
Librarian Aurora Teagarden is embroiled in a murder case when a member of her book reading group is killed. Mystery, with Candace Cameron Bure. (2015)

TUESDAY
Fatal Justice, Channel 5, 3.20pm
A woman shopping in a convenience store witnesses a robbery in which the owner is killed and her niece seriously injured, ending up a paraplegic. The shopper, Karen, believes she recognises one of the robbers, but he is released thanks to a false alibi. Tortured by the memories of the murder of her brother – a crime that was never solved – Karen embarks on a trail of revenge against the perpetrators. Drama, starring Cynthia Watros. (2012)

Entrapment, Friday, BBC1, 11.25pm

WEDNESDAY
Millionaire Mystery: The Ultimate Gift, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A man has to complete a series of odd tasks set by billionaire grandfather in order to receive his inheritance from his billionaire grandfather, with no idea the challenges will change his life completely. Family drama, starring James Garner. (2006)

THURSDAY
Left to Die: The Sandra & Tammi Chase Story, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A woman takes a holiday in Ecuador, but ends up arrested for drug trafficking and incarcerated in a brutal prison. Her daughter devotes herself to getting her released, facing a lengthy battle with bureaucracy and a foreign legal system she knows nothing of. Fact-based prison drama, starring Barbara Hershey. (2012)

FRIDAY
Entrapment, BBC1, 11.25pm
An elusive professional art thief suspected of stealing a priceless painting is pursued by an insurance agent. However, instead of bringing the criminal to book, she teams up with him to plot the robbery of a lifetime – although neither is sure the other can be trusted. Crime thriller, starring Sean Connery, Catherine Zeta-Jones and Ving Rhames. (1999)

Richard opens up the maze to more famous faces

Many viewers couldn't contain their excitement when it was announced that this puzzle-based TV show was winging its way back to our screens.

It follows last year's successful Stand Up To Cancer special, hosted by Stephen Merchant. Rumours of a full-time TV comeback first surfaced last year, with former Doctor Who David Tennant tipped to host.

However, it was Richard Ayoade who was eventually announced as the new Maze Master for the series reboot.

The comedian first found fame through his roles in The Mighty Boosh, Garth Marenghi's Darkplace and The IT Crowd, but has recently become an accomplished presenter, fronting factual shows Travel Man and Gadget Man.

The Rocky Horror Picture Show writer and star Richard O'Brien was the first and most recognised host of The Crystal Maze, presenting the show during it most successful period from 1990 to 1993.

He was known for his kooky and quirky demeanour during the show's games, including his Victorian sense of fashion and playing the harmonica while he waited for contestants to complete the tasks.Edward Tudor-Pole then took over and ran proceedings before the show ended in 1995.

For those who haven't seen the show before, contestants of The Crystal Maze are challenged to navigate themselves through a labyrinth of tasks.

They pick up time crystals as they pass through each of the four zones – Aztec, Medieval, Industrial and Futuristic – which they need to use in the final mission.

The team of five contestants must then battle in the Crystal Dome to win a cash prize.

There will be 20 hour-long episodes in this run, all taking place in a specially-built 30,000 sq ft set in Bristol, created by original Crystal Maze designer James Dillon.

In last week's first celebrity special, Ore Oduba, Vicky Pattison, Alex Brooker, Lydia Bright and Louie Spence were the brave contenders taking on the challenge.

Tonight, TV presenter Steve Jones, Gogglebox star and queen of the I'm A Celebrity jungle Scarlett Moffatt, former F1 racing driver David Coulthard, and TOWIE's Joey Essex, join team captain, model and TV personality Jodie Kidd in the four fantastical zones, attempting to win enough crystals that will earn them precious seconds in the Crystal Dome to win prizes for Stand Up to Cancer.

Watch out too for comedy actors Adam Buxton, known for numerous panel shows and podcasts, and Jessica Hynes, from Spaced and W1A, who will be making cameo appearances.

Buxton has his own character, a disembodied head called Jarhead who lives in the Futuristic Zone, and asks contestants to answer riddles.

Hynes, meanwhile, plays The Knight, guardian of the Medieval Zone, who will present a major challenge to any foolhardy crystal collector wanting to progress.

The Crystal Maze: Celebrity Special, Friday, Channel 4, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
Loaded
Channel 4, 10pm
This new comedy drama about four friends who become rich overnight after selling their video game starring a cat for £246 million has divided both critics and viewers. However the adventures of troubled love-sick Josh (Jim Howick), flash boy Leon (Samuel Anderson), guilt-ridden public schoolboy Ewan (Jonny Sweet) and likeable ex-junkie Watto Nick Helm may still have start-up potential. Rather than being about how people would spend that type of money if they made it, Loaded has more depth and is all about the guilt, pain and torment that such wealth brings. The first series ends tonight with the gang in disarray, as Leon tries to bring about a temporary reconciliation. But the quartet have to decide what is more important – the money, the company, or staying together.

TUESDAY
The Dog Rescuers with Alan Davies
Channel 5, 8pm
A new, 16-part run begins tonight, and kicks-off in heartbreaking fashion with the story of Timmy, an elderly collie cross who is discovered in a house surrounded by his own mess. To make matters even worse, he has a huge and painful tumour on his face - luckily for him, RSPCA inspector Anthony refuses to give up on Timmy, who is going to need lots of care and attention. Anthony's fellow inspector, Helen, comes face-to-face with stroppy shih-tzu Archie; she hopes his grumpy mood will lighten once the matted fur obscuring his eyes and ears is trimmed back to a manageable length. There's also an insight into the fate of two adorable French bulldog puppies abandoned in a box in Pontypool Park, and Davies himself pops up in a bid to inspire someone to adopt an unwanted animal.

WEDNESDAY
Watchdog Live
BBC1, 8pm
New series. Matt Allwright, Steph McGovern and Nikki Fox return with a new series of topical reports and investigations, live from the programme's new home in Salford. In this episode, the hosts report on the alarming concerns surrounding smart meters in residential properties. Elsewhere, the team embark on an undercover investigation into a company that is training their new recruits to deliberately target elderly customers with products that they do not need, often costing thousands of pounds.

The Dog Rescuers with Alan Davies, Tuesday, Channel 5, 8pm

THURSDAY
The Supervet
Channel 4, 8pm
There was a time when many pets and animals would be put down due to injury, or left to suffer. Thankfully, pioneering veterinarian Dr Noel Fitzpatrick will always go the extra mile to help a creature achieve a better quality of life. This week he uses his talents to treat a puppy called Poppy, which has difficulties with walking, and a lurcher called Dylan needs help with a collapsed joint. The programme also features a one-year-old cat that was hit by a car on its first venture outside the house, leaving it requiring emergency treatment.

FRIDAY
Great British Menu: The Finals
BBC2, 8pm
To some cynical viewers, the chance to cook a meal may not seem like much of a prize for a professional chef. However, the climax of this year's Great British Menu isn't just any old dinner party – it's a Taste of Summer banquet to celebrate 140 years of Wimbledon. After making it through the regional heats and this week's finals, the winning chefs will now get a chance to present their dishes to guests including Wimbledon players and champions, as well as those who work hard behind the scenes. But will knowing the likes of Tim Henman and Judy Murray are about to tuck into their food inspire the chefs to serve their best ever cooking, or will the pressure in the kitchen get too much?

The Secret World of Posh Pets
ITV, 8pm
New series. People's high-end pampering of their pets, detailing the extent to which some wealthy individuals indulge their much-loved and respected animals.

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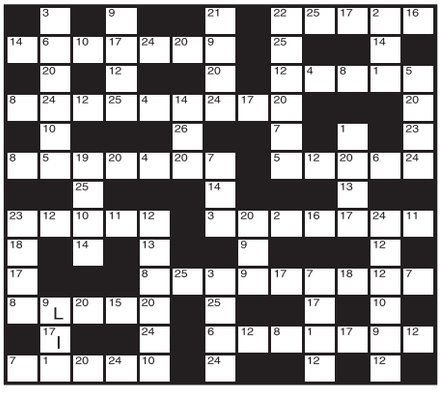
BRAIN GYM

No.435

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



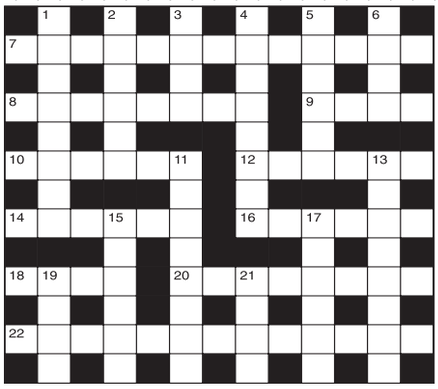
1	14
2	15
3	16
4	17 I
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9 L	22
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
A	Q	B	S	Y	R	P	D	H	C	U	I	M
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
J	L	G	X	T	V	F	N	E	K	Z	W	O

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.



Cryptic Clues:

Across

7. Dancing in the air? (6,2,5)
8. Did they get promotion after skating? (8)
9. Is on charges (4)
10. A call for a bite (6)
12. Carry too far because of celebration (6)
14. Dances to go higher (6)
16. Soundly beat for writing rubbish about hothead (6)
18. Top performer brings deserters back (4)
20. Photo of a quick bit of markmanship? (8)
22. Be strongly inclined to be really intelligent (4,1,4,4)

Down

1. The make-up of 444 on hands and knees (3,5)
2. Urging birds to produce? (6)
3. A bit of a nasty eyesore (4)
4. Branch not hitting the target? (8)
5. Mark time and refuse to work (6)
6. Begin, though having nothing to write (4)
11. Put Communist pointer to the East on the drawing board again? (8)
13. Ignore the deduction from the bill (8)
15. Student has no head for becoming the breadwinner (6)
17. Take up the summary again? (6)
19. Rip a sign of sadness (4)
21. All right in the morning, though in a frenzy (4)

Quick Clues:

Across

7. Counter-charge (13)
8. Remoteness (8)
9. Simple (4)
10. Bewail (6)
12. Really (6)
14. Redress (6)
16. Connect (6)
18. Stylish (4)
20. Uncommunicative (8)
22. Upright (13)

Down

1. Devote (8)
2. Squirm (6)
3. Portent (4)
4. Second-rate (8)
5. Be there (6)
6. Fling (4)
11. Alluring (8)
13. Outside (8)
15. Fill (6)
17. Release (3,3)
19. Regard (4)
21. Manger (4)

Sudoku

7				4		6		
		1			5			3
5			3	1		8	7	
	1			3				4
8			9		1			7
3				8			5	
		7		9	3			6
6			4		2	1		
		9	1					8

Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

4	5	8	1	2	7	6	3	9
6	7	2	8	3	9	5	1	4
9	3	1	6	4	5	7	2	8
7	6	4	9	1	3	8	5	2
2	1	5	4	6	8	9	7	3
3	8	9	7	5	2	4	6	1
5	2	7	3	9	4	1	8	6
8	4	6	2	7	1	3	9	5
1	9	3	5	8	6	2	4	7

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Bang; 8 Accountant; 9 Seraglio; 10 Rest; 12 Sweets; 14 Flinch; 15 Ardent; 17 Cogent; 18 Asti; 19 Eyesight; 21 Concoction; 22 Side. Down: 2 Afterwards; 3 Gala; 4 Scales; 5 Put off; 6 Starting; 7 Stet; 11 Second-hand; 13 Eyepiece; 16 Trench; 17 Cleric; 18 Arch; 20 Inns.
QUICK - Across: 1 Load; 8 Roundabout; 9 Disgrace; 10 Tray; 12 Betray; 14 Trusty; 15 Vassal; 17 Create; 18 Dear; 19 Sediment; 21 Politeness; 22 Tusk. Down: 2 Obliterate; 3 Drag; 4 Lunacy; 5 Advent; 6 Abstruse; 7 Stay; 11 Astuteness; 13 Restrain; 16 Lessen; 17 Cudgel; 18 Dupe; 20 Most.

Quiz

1. Of what is the farad a unit?
2. Who created the Secret Seven?
3. What do the letters LED stand for?
4. Which of the Seven Wonders of the World was found underwater?
5. What is the capital of Laos?
6. Into which ocean does the Limpopo flow?
7. What do we call a mammal of the genus Erinaceus?
8. Of what is semiotics the study?
9. What is hydrophobia more commonly called?
10. Whose play Hedda Gabler was first produced in 1891?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 SS; 2 Moose; 3 Nephew; 4 French Revolutionary; 5 £35,000; 6 Vanwall; 7 Laurel; 8 A computer language; 9 Parsley; 10 Senegal.

Niner: PROVINCES

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

87943789215 gives a bird,
52915 gives a second bird,
3568 gives a third bird.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Taste of Greece – on your doorstep

WHETHER it was the warm sunny Sunday afternoon, the party in full swing all around us or simply the layout of the quaint and rustic-looking restaurant we were sat in. . .

Whatever it was, we all felt like we had been whisked off to the shores of the Mediterranean. We were in fact in a lovely little Greek restaurant, in the middle of Kingswinford, but with the beautifully-decorated walls and cafe-style layout.

We had driven passed Zendi, in High Street, on numerous occasions and felt it was time to give the place a go. Having never eaten at a Greek restaurant – but having looked at the menu online and realised the food appeared to tick pretty much all the boxes of ingredients we love – we were really looking forward to the experience.

CELEBRATION

What we hadn't planned on was arriving in the middle of a celebration, with scores of happy people celebrating the birth of a newborn baby. But for us, however, the celebrations just added to the lovely atmosphere.

My wife, Kelly, had already taken a quick glance online to see what was on offer, but a little warning is needed here – they are not exactly the same, so she was a little disappointed to find the swordfish was no longer on offer. But there was still plenty to choose from.

Before the meals, drinks were ordered. My two-year-old daughter, Annabelle, had a simple blackcurrant squash while we decided to share a bottle of wine.

When the time came to order our food I was left with a dilemma. What to choose when everything looked and smelt so good. Zendi's chefs pride themselves on hand-picking their ingredients, which are delivered fresh, daily, to give customers 'a truly refreshing taste of Greece'. Not knowing how big the portions would be – but knowing we were all very hungry – we ordered a starter each, which we shared.

The lamb kleftico with potatoes and vegetables

Inside you're transported to white washed villas

First was the tzatziki, a famous Greek dip made with yoghurt, shredded cucumber, garlic and mint. It is one of my wife's favourites, plus Annabelle likes anything with yoghurt in it.Vegetarian dolmades, or yalantzi, was my preferred choice, vine leaves stuffed with rice, herbs, vegetable oil and onions, served with a tomato sauce. It was delicious.

My wife opted for the Snack of Crete, grilled crusty bread rubbed with fresh garlic, served with tomatoes, spring onions, feta cheese, oregano and a dash of olive oil. With the mains we decided to try to eat and drink traditional dishes, I went for the classic kleftiko, fresh leg of lamb on the bone, braised slowly in an oven with fresh vegetables, herbs and red wine until tender.

Kelly decided on the stifado, lean cubes of beef and baby onions, cooked in a casserole and herbs until tender, served with rice or French fries.

There isn't a children's menu as such, instead the restaurant makes recommendations and brings out smaller versions of the main meals on offer. Finally, it was time for the dessert.

We were all pretty full so we decided to share one – and it was a great decision.

We settled on the Zendi Galaktoboureko, a divine combination of creamy custard and flaky filo dough textures, all wrapped up in a cinnamon and citrus flavoured filling.

So, if you fancy being whisked away to the sights, sounds and flavours of Greece give Zendi a try.

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NEW SHOWS COMING INTO THE WEST END FOR 2017

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THE GIRLS is the true story of the Yorkshire CALENDAR GIRLS, a group of ordinary ladies who achieved something extraordinary. This new musical comedy has brought together the writing talents of Gary Barlow and Tim Firth who grew up in the same village in the North of England and have been friends for 25 years.

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Extra nights are available at £49.95pp

Single room supplement £50pp per night. Subject to availability. *This deal will be offered most days of the year to December 2017 (may be a limited number of excluded dates). Show tickets are subject to availability and not all shows are available on all dates. Please note that Shrewsberry pickup is not available for the Capital Bargain break.

For more information or to book, please call: 01902 902165

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PROPERTY

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO HOME BUYING AND LETTING

Stunning home with great views from every aspect

This stunning executive, luxury four-bedroomed modern detached property in Oakham Road, Tividale, Oldbury, comes with two spacious reception rooms and great views from every aspect.

Tastefully decorated throughout, it is for sale through Love Your Postcode at £324,950.

A private drive leads to a porch area, opening up to the reception hall which has an under stairs storage cupboard and a cloakroom/WC.

A well-appointed kitchen/breakfast room comes complete with a vinyl floor finish, spot lights to the ceiling, a range of base units with cupboards and drawers beneath, complementary work surface areas, bowl and a half single drainer stainless steel sink with filter tap, integrated appliances to include a Hotpoint dishwasher, Hotpoint five ring gas hob, Hotpoint double oven, integrated Hotpoint fridge freezer, Hotpoint cooker hood, storage cupboards at high level.

The kitchen overlooks the rear and is served by a utility room.

The through lounge comprises of an open dining room with a bay window to the front, double sliding doors opening to the lounge area with spot lights to the ceiling, a gas fire in a feature fireplace, and French doors opening to an easy to manage part lawned and paved garden.

The first floor landing is spacious. The front facing master bedroom has an en-suite shower room with a vinyl floor finish, heated towel rail, a corner shower cubicle, part tiled walls, a wash hand basin with work top and storage beneath. Bedroom two overlooks the rear garden. Bedroom three has a window to the front. Bedroom four is L-shaped.

The family bathroom has vinyl flooring, a wash hand basin with a work top and storage cupboard beneath, WC with push button flush, a walk-in shower cubicle, part tiled walls, a panelled bath with tiled splash-backs and a heated towel rail.

The garage has lighting, power points and an alarm sensor.

Love Your Postcode are a next-generation property sales and lettings business with traditional values.

The development of their technology, and values/ ideas has fundamentally disrupted the existing model by giving the customer everything they have been asking for at a fraction of the cost.

TIVIDALE £324,950

TO VIEW THIS PROPERTY

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KEY FEATURES

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Bobby Singh
Co-Founder
bobbysinghesq

Bungalow in need of general updating

OLDBURY
£220,000

Surrounded by established and mature gardens, 133 New Birmingham Road, Oldbury, is a detached two bedroomed bungalow in need of general updating and decoration.

Having good sized accommodation, it is for sale through Tom Giles at £220,000 with no chain.

In a good position for commuting, it has an established and mature tiered garden with footpath approach and crazy paved patio to front.

It has a vestibule to an entrance hall, front and rear sitting rooms, a kitchen with appliances, a side lobby, cloakroom/WC, two bedrooms and a bathroom, detached garage and a driveway and gardens.

For further information, or to book that all important viewing, contact the agents on 0121 522 6171.

House which is larger than it first appears is extended

RUGELEY
£159,995 <<<

Being deceptively spacious, this extended three-bedroomed semi-detached house in Talbot Road, Brereton, Rugeley lies in a popular residential area.

It is for sale through Goodchilds at £159,995.

Having double glazing and gas central heating, the property briefly comprises a porch entrance, an entrance hallway, an open plan lounge and dining room, an extended kitchen, three good bedrooms and a bathroom.

The kitchen includes an integrated dishwasher and pantry.

Outside, to the front the property there is a driveway providing off road parking and a generous rear garden and enclosed garage/store (used for storage only).

Contact Goodchilds on 01889 221019 or visit www.goodchilds-uk.com

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102 Eva Road, Birmingham
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Guide: £24,000 - £29,000

38 The Uplands, Smethwick
3 Bed Mid-Terraced House
Guide: £50,000 plus

48 Dora Road, Handsworth
2 Bed Mid-Terraced House
Guide: £40,000 plus

3 Ash Drive, West Bromwich
3 Bed Semi-Detached House
Guide: £50,000 plus

15 Wheatley St, West Bromwich
3 Bed Mid-Terraced House
Guide: £49,000 plus

3 Holden Crescent, Walsall
1 Bed Ground Floor Flat
Guide: £28,000 - £33,000

Flat 16, 46-48 Handsworth Wood Road, Handsworth Wood
Second Floor 1 Bed Apartment
Guide: £10,000 plus

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ADVERTISING FEATURE

Snap up a £1k saving

on a unique two-bed home at Harvills Grange

Would you love to live in a unique detached home at Lovell Homes' popular Harvills Grange development in West Bromwich – and save over £1,000?

This special incentive is now available on the development's attractive two-bedroom Brompton coach house with Lovell offering to make a £1,000 contribution towards the buyer's legal fees plus free flooring throughout (subject to terms and conditions).

"The only house type of its kind at the development, the Brompton offers modern, open-plan living at its best," says Michelle Barnsley, field sales manager for Lovell Homes.

"It would make a brilliant first-time buy for someone looking to get on to the housing ladder but would equally suit a downsizer, offering all the advantages of living in a detached home. Add to that the savings from our legal fees and flooring deal and this is a great opportunity to secure a beautifully-designed, brand-new property, with garage, in a location with excellent commuting links across the Midlands."

The Scotswood show home

The Brompton – which is also being marketed through local estate agent Shipways – is priced at £142,950 (£114,360 after a Help to Buy: Equity Loan*). Lovell will contribute £1,000 towards the buyer's legal fees, and provide a free flooring package, subject to the purchaser using a Lovell-recommended solicitor and Independent Financial Advisor. Call 01215 147 308 to find out more.

Highlight of the Brompton's first-floor living accommodation is a spacious dual-aspect open-plan kitchen and living / dining room, which provides the perfect place to cook, eat, socialise and relax. The sleek, contemporary kitchen includes an integrated fridge-freezer as well as a Bosch electric oven and gas hob. The master bedroom comes with en-suite and the accommodation is completed by the second bedroom and bathroom. Two bedrooms and two bathrooms make this modern home super-flexible, with adaptable accommodation which could also work well for two friends buying together or for sharers. On the ground floor, the Brompton benefits from its own garage and front door as well as turfed front and rear gardens.

Harvills Grange has excellent transport connections. The development is situated less than a mile from the A41 Black Country New Road which gives direct access to the M5 and M6. West Bromwich Central tram stop, situated on the Midlands Metro Line, provides frequent services in both directions between Birmingham and Wolverhampton.

The Harvills Grange show homes and sales and marketing suite on Dial Lane, West Bromwich B70 0EQ are open on Monday from 11am to 5pm and on Thursday to Sunday from 10am to 5pm.

The Scotswood show home

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The Brompton
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Smart and attractive new home is packed with appeal

ROWLEY REGIS
£144,950 <<<

A very attractive and beautifully presented modern three-bedroomed semi-detached house in Park Street, Rowley Regis, is for sale through Love Your Postcode at £144,950.

The home has a modern neutral decor throughout and a gate gives access to the main front door.

It has an entrance hallway, a kitchen with integrated appliances, a ground floor WC and a lounge, three bedrooms and a family bathroom.

There is also off road parking.

In more detail, the lounge is spacious, light and neutral. It also has laminate flooring and double doors to the lovely rear garden.

For further information, or to book a viewing, contact Love Your Postcode on 0800 862 0871 or visit www.loveyourpostcode.com

Save over £3,000 when you grab this plot

WEST BROMWICH
£182,950

West Midlands home seekers can save over £3,000 through a special legal fees and flooring offer from Lovell Homes, at the company's Harvills Grange development in West Bromwich.

Subject to terms and conditions, the company is offering a £1,000 contribution towards legal fees plus free flooring included throughout to the purchaser of one Ringwood three-bedroom semi-detached house style (Plot 94). This modern, family-friendly home, with garage, is priced at £182,950.

"Our legal fees and flooring offer adds up to an amazing savings deal for one lucky homebuyer," said Lovell Homes field sales manager Michelle Barnsley. "So if you're looking for a well-designed family home in a location perfect for commuting across the Midlands, get in touch now to find out more."

Contact the sales team on 0121 2227 531.

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EMAIL: kph.parkviewsales@kier.co.uk

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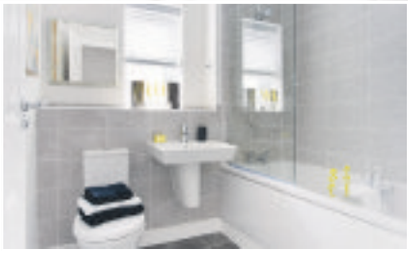

CGI of 3 bedroom Langley. Photographs of typical Kier showhome interiors. Elevations and finishes may vary. *Help to buy available upon request subject to terms and conditions. †Calls cost 2p per minute plus your phone company's access charge.

Cul-de-sac position for well presented detached

A well maintained detached family home in White Hollies, Pelsall, Walsall, lies in a sought after cul-de-sac.

It is for sale through Webbs at offers over £209,950 with no chain.

Situated in a popular location, it is close to all local amenities, shops and schools.

Its accommodation briefly comprises a through hallway, a

PELSALL
£209,950

guest WC, a study/playroom, a lounge/diner, three bedrooms, a family bathroom and an en-suite to the master bedroom.

Outside there is private driveway providing ample parking space, and landscaped gardens.

In more detail the study/play room has a window to the front, while the lounge/diner overlooks the rear, having patio doors to the garden and a feature fireplace and stairs off to the first floor.

The kitchen includes an integrated oven, hob with extractor hood over and ample appliance space. The rear garden has a patio area, lawn and shrub borders. Call 01922 663399.

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AERIAL AND TV SPECIALIST Any TV Repairs, Plasma, LED etc. CCTV cameras supplied & fitted. Any area. Free Estimates. 7 days. Digital aerials, Sky installation. Wall mounts / TV setups. 07850 330251.

specialists at your service

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AERIALS FITTED FROM £75
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blinds

MADE-TO-MEASURE BLINDS SALE
UP TO 50% OFF*
MEASURING & FITTING INCLUDED
BLINDS | CURTAINS | SHUTTERS | CARPETS

HILLARYS
TO BOOK A **FREE** HOME APPOINTMENT WITH YOUR LOCAL ADVISOR CALL **0800 916 6563** OR VISIT **hillarys.co.uk**
*Ts & Cs apply

alarms/security

PREMIER ALARMS
Supplied and Fitted £195
Servicing and Repairs
12 Months Warranty
All areas covered
All quotes beaten!
Call: 0121 601 9791

appliance repairs

A SAME DAY REPAIR - Cookers Autos Fridges Vacs and Micros. Call 07900 578897 / 07801 746853.

bathrooms

BATHROOMS R US
Over 20 years exp in bathroom installations.
Refurbs/ Plastering
EMERGENCY CALL OUTS!
20% OFF, FREE QUOTES
07392 379741 or 01543 529648

BATHROOM DESIGN. All bathrooms fitted, tiling, flooring, complete bathrooms. 07850 382548.

building services

DAVIES & SON BUILDERS
Over 35 years exp
All aspects of building work
Extensions, loft conversions, roofing, driveways & landscaping.
Discounts offered.
01902 579592 / 07837 994465

building supplies

QUALITY DOORS AND HARDWOOD FLOORING @ low prices. Call Arnold Laver 0121 533 5428.

RECLAIMED BRICKS, Tiles, Slates, Oakbeams, Flooring, York Stone. Cawarden 01889 574066. sales@cawardenreclaim.co.uk

carpentry & joinery

CARPENTRY AND JOINERY Kitchens, fitted wardrobes, doors, flooring, staircases and refurbs. 07903 234137 or 0121 4939733.

carpet fitters

A CARPETS & VINYLS supplied or just fitted, quality samples brought to your home, no job too small, free quotes call Mark 01543 820598 / 07941 619694.

fencing

PORTWAY FENCING
SPECIAL OFFER
10 Bays of quality fencing, concrete posts, gravel boards **£695**
Heavy duty panels supplied & fitted.
0121 531 5250 / 07866 137 656
Mon - Fri 8am - 4.30pm
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DELIVERY AVAILABLE
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gardening services

Landywood Tree & Landscaping Services
All garden work, tree felling/lopping, pruning, hedges trimmed, turf, patios, fencing, block-paving etc.
www.landywoodlandscaping.co.uk
01922 898 710 / 07973 177 976

J&B TREE CARE Landscape and Jetwashing Services. All Pesticide /Fungicide work. Free fixed quotes: 07786 166856/ 01922 449268.

gas fitting

GAS SERVICES
- Boilers • Cookers
- Fires • Gas Checks
- Landlord Certificates
- Gas Leaks Traced

Fitted, Serviced and Repaired
Same Day Service
Free Quotes
DISCOUNTS FOR OAPs
Call: 01902 366855/ 07761 973975

READERS ARE ADVISED To check that anyone carrying out any Gas work is Gas Safe Registered. It is an offence under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 to carry out gas work in the UK without being on the Gas Safe Register.

gates

ALL METAL GATES,RAILINGS, etc. Free quotes, also repairs & fitting. 07903 500642 24 hours.

DARLASTON FABS 30 years exp in supplying/ fitting gates and railings. Free quotes: 07497 667752.

handyman services

YOUR LOCAL HANDYMAN
FREE QUOTES
All work guaranteed, Most trades covered, References available on request. No job too big or too small!
CALL MIKE: 07947 621047
0121 6010479

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I average around 1 to 2 phone calls a day from customers as a direct result of my Classified Advertising. I am very happy with my response levels.
Mr Causer.

For great business results call
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ClassifiedAds
Brought to you by Express & Star

HANDY MAN - Most trades, plumbing, heating, gardening & decorating. Gutter clean no ladders, free quotes. 07850 559315.

LOCK & CARPENTRY Plumbing, Small job specialist. Free quotes 01902 683100 or 07934 460864.

house clearances

ABSOLUTELY ANYTHING CLEARED
FULL OR PART, GARAGES AND SHEDS RUBBISH REMOVED WASTE LICENCE
01384 486456 / 07711661135

A1 HOUSE CLEARANCE
Full, part and single rubbish removed.
Garage and sheds cleared. Leather 3 piece suites and leather chesterfields wanted.
01922 492007

A1 HOUSE CLEARANCE
Full, part and single rubbish removed.
Garage and sheds cleared. Leather 3 piece suites and leather chesterfields wanted.
01922 492007

ALL ROUND CLEARANCE
Professional family run business
House clearances full or part, also garages, sheds etc.
Telephone Kev
07794 912844

A ABSOLUTE BEST cash price paid for house clearances and bereavements. Also removals undertaken. **07852 172641 / 07710 360327**

kitchen fitters

THE KITCHEN FITTER Over 20 years experience. Call 07881 654757 or 01543 373233.

lock services

LOCKRITE local father and daughter locksmiths, lock-outs, broken locks, UPVC specialist, 24hr service. 01922 780078.

painters / decorators

LADY DECORATOR, full house or one wall - to customer requirments. For a quote call 07522 643706.

plans prepared

ADAM DESIGN, Building Plans. Drawn and submitted to council. Tel: 01902 620200 / 07841 654037. Email: adamdesign@sky.com

plastering

MINT PLASTERING
For the very best in plastering and rendering, full rooms inc materials from 110. Halls, stairs and landings from 200
30 years experience.
Free quotes. All work guaranteed
01922 606503 / 07519 694516

M & S PLASTERING & BUILDING Services. Home/Garden Improvements.Mark or Sara: 07741 770897

MINT PLASTERING & rendering 30 yrs exp. All work guaranteed. 01922 606503 or 07519 694516.

STEVES PLASTERING SERVICE Clean and Reliable. All Work Undertaken, All Areas. Call 0121 567 5919 / 07977 262943.

plumbing & heating

ALL PLUMBING WORK UNDERTAKEN
No job too small or large.
Call Will for a free quote
07521 411108

A.A HEATING & PLUMBING All gas work. Install/ Service/ Repair. 01922 660410 or 07540 950588.

GAS CENTRAL HEATING Central heating and Boiler changes. Gas Safe, Free Quotes: 07497 826697.

PLUMBING WORK UNDERTAKEN No job too small or large. Call Will for a free quote on: 07521 411108.

removals

KT HOUSE REMOVALS
12 years experience.
SINGLE ITEMS TO FULL LOADS.
LOCAL OR DISTANCE. FULLY INSURED.
Free Quotes - Call Ric on:
07771 727119

CALL DEAN NOW: For all your Removal needs. 07429 453209/ 01902 830870 / 01384 940260.

KC REMOVALS We beat any quote, full or part loads, all areas. Anything considered. Call on 07867 862227.

KT REMOVALS 12 yrs exp. Single items to full load removals. Local / distance. Call Ric: 07771 727119.

roofing

A GRIFFITHS ROOFING & BUILDING Pitched & flat roofs. repairs, chimneys, fascias, guttering. 35 yrs exp. 07941 907401/01902 865771.

rubbish removal

LETS TALK RUBBISH No Skips Needed.Load/Remove any Waste, House Clearance. 07969 628382

skip hire

EURO SKIP HIRE
We supply Mini, Midi and builders skips.
CALL NOW
for a FREE quote on:
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A absolute affordable skip
RUSSELL SKIPS
Mini, midi skips
Prompt delivery / collection
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MT SKIPS & GRAB HIRE
Save £££s
All size skips and all areas covered
Same day delivery faster than a phone call!!!
Open 7 days a week
SCRAP CARS REMOVED FOR FREE
07920 88 57 74 or 01384 24 09 56

GOLDSHILL SKIPS
Bring your own waste cheaper than skips. General, Green, Wood waste any size vehicle. Phone for prices:
0121 557 3346

AAA SKIP HIRE All sizes available, competitive prices. Call: 01922 711411(option 2) or 07592 940556.

STONES SKIP HIRE 0121 557 1480 / 07886 721875 www.stoneskiphire.co.uk

upholstery

MR B'S UPHOLSTERY
RE- UPHOLSTERING OF SOFA'S, DINING FURNITURE, CARAVANS, CAR RETRIMS AND MORE.
www.mrbsupholstery.co.uk
01543 500677 07738 851601

4 Pets & Animals

equestrian corner

ALL READERS are advised to check if Horses, Donkeys or Ponies have the required Passport information.

guns & dogs

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS
Advertisers must ensure that they meet all necessary legal requirements for owning and using guns.

WORKING COCKER Spaniel Pups, excellent pedigrees, KC Reg, £750 each. 07976 849325.

pets corner

NOTICE TO READERS
Please be aware that when purchasing a puppy there are some simple guidelines you can follow to ensure that you are not purchasing from a Puppy Farmer:
1. Try to ensure you visit the puppy whilst it is still with it's Mother.
2. Do not arrange to collect a puppy from any other location than that of the breeder.
3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree.
Whilst Midland News Association publications take great care to avoid publication of advertisements from Puppy Farmers we cannot accept any liability should readers purchase from this kind of establishment.

5 Business & Farming

business opportunities

READERS are recommended to take appropriate professional advice before entering into any obligations.

business directory

commercial premises

UNITS AND OFFICE SPACE to let in Oldbury, West Bromwich and Walsall. Easy Terms. Ashmore Properties 0121 520 5318.

6 Property

overseas property

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments.

SELL IT FAST SELL IT LOCAL
01902 317878
ClassiedAds

properties wanted

FAST CASH FOR YOUR PROPERTY
- Reposessions stopped
- Houses bought in any condition
- Legal fees paid
- Probate Estates Welcome
- Mortgages / Loans Cleared

CASH PAID WITHIN DAYS!
FREEPHONE 0800 121 6007
OAKWOOD HOMEBUYERS
Friendly, local company here to help you 7 days a week. Est. 10 years.
www.oakwood-homebuyers.com

Home Cash Buyer
Sell today, sign today, complete when u wish
£££ RENT BACK OPTIONS £££
Houses / Land Required
Ring Paul 24/7 Local 07870 341 089
Sandwell area: Call 0121 696 4154
Walsall & Cannock area: Call 01922 432049
Wolverhampton: Call 01902 489901
www.homecashbuyer.co.uk

I BUY HOUSES
- Expired listings
- Fire damaged houses
- Debt ridden houses
- Vacant houses
- Smelly houses
- Unwanted houses

Any place, any area, any condition. If you don't want it, I do!
Call Amy: 07511 299 010

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"I am really pleased with the response I get from my Classified Advertising!"
Paul Westwood - Home Cash Buyer
For great business results call
01902 319 191
ClassiedAds Brought to you by Express & Star

Need to sell your home fast?
We can help you make a fresh start
With solutions to suit ...
you can clear your debts and make a fresh start
Purchase Agreed Within 7 DAYS
ALL CIRCUMSTANCES CONSIDERED
COMPLETE ON DATE TO SUIT
FREE VALUATION AND LEGALS
FREE FRIENDLY ADVICE
LOCAL COMPANY
MARION | PROPERTY SOLUTIONS
WHY NOT CALL US TODAY
for an informal, friendly and confidential chat?
0121 405 0767
*Terms and Conditions apply
OUR LINES ARE OPEN 24/7

accommodation to let

WEST BROMWICH
Brand New Studios and 1 Bed Flats available
NO DEPOSIT
DSS 35+ Welcome. Move in Immediately
07967 016425

J9 Accommodation
NO DEPOSIT
★MOVE IN TODAY★
Studios *from* £90pw*
Rooms *from* £65pw*
*Includes Most Bills
CHECK WEBSITE FOR LIVE LIST
Midland Landlord Accreditation Scheme
01902 213121
J9accommodation.com

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments/contracts.

NOTICE TO READERS
It is an offence under the Accommodation Agencies Act 1953, for an Agency to charge a fee simply for the registration of your requirements and/or supplying particulars of premises to let.

7 Jobs

building & construction

GROUNDWORKERS or company required for Local work Tel 01384 230222

finance & accounting

FINANCE ASSISTANT
Part Time
Must have experience with Sage and Microsoft Office.
Duties include posting cash to ledgers, authorising invoices, assisting telephone cover and general office duties.
Good Rates of pay for an experienced person
Birmingham Area
Please send CV to
james@staystrip.co.uk

employment wanted

ADMIN / RECEPTION / GENERAL OFFICE WORK WANTED
For smart lady, seeks ideally a long term permanent role or any temporary work.
Excellent references. Walsall and surrounding areas.
Telephone 07976 888820 or 01922 635813.
goodman1921@hotmail.co.uk

full time - general

GENTS HAIRDRESSER
(Barber required)
Quinton
Telephone 0121 422 4104

8 Motoring

cars over £1500

BMW X3 3.0i SE
54 plate, 100,000 miles, 2 owners, MoT December, all usual extras, excellent condition.
£2,800 ono.
07501 755703.

LANDROVER FREELANDER SE-TD4
2007, 82,000.00 Miles, electric windows, fsh, long MoT, cruise control, sunroof, Alloys, Stereo, SAT NAV half leather seats:
£5,750.00 ono
07946 546576

cars under £1500

GOOD RUNNER
AUDI A2
1.4 TDi, 51 plate, 131,811 miles, MoT till March 2018,
£900 ono.
07913 223587.

BARGAIN
FORD MONDEO
Estate, 1999, Blk, petrol, ABS, EW, air bag, central locking, stereo, CD, dog guard. 3 mths MoT.100,500 mls.
£150.
01543 278311.

BARGAIN
RENAULT MEGANE SCENIC 2.0 PETROL
2000, 12 months MoT, 116,000 miles, alloys, tow bar, CL, double sunroof.
£350 ono
07760 390986.

DIESEL
RENAULT SCENIC
1.5, diesel, good condition.
Serviced, cam belt changed.
MoT, 70,000 miles.
Same owner for last five years.
£1,195.
07742 707464.

BARGAIN
ROVER 1.4 SPRIGHT
52 plate, 2 owners from new, 64,000 genuine miles, MoT January 2018.
Good condition
£425 ono.
07375 624574.

SUZUKI ALTO 1.0
£30 year tax, 2003, excellent mechanically, MoT April 2018, 94,884 miles, cam belt changed 91,000, new CV's bottom arms.
£750
07543 919296.

VAUXHALL VECTRA
2003, 89,000 Miles, blue, electric windows, long MoT, diesel, CD, new clutch and rear shock absorbers, good conition.
£595 ono
0121 557 2706

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

Express & Star
FIXED PRICE RECRUITMENT PACKAGE
FILL YOUR NEXT VACANCY WITH OUR BRONZE FIXED PRICE RECRUITMENT PACKAGE
Bronze package includes:
- 5cm x 2 column advert in Express & Star (Thursday)
- 5cm x 2 column advert in Chronicle of your choice
- Two week listing on jobs.expressandstar.com
- 5 line advert to appear in Express & Star Classified jobs for 5 nights
- We will run the lineage and online advert on a daily basis until you fill the vacancy

Package Price £399*
Contact Tracey Thompson on 01902 319645 or email tracey.thompson@expressandstar.co.uk
*All prices are subject to VAT

VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6

2004, 148,000 Miles, silver, abs, electric windows, air bag, air con, fsh, alarm, MoT, central locking, pas, tax

£450 ono

07789 768170

VOLKSWAGEN PASSAT 2.0SE

2001, 63,000 miles, Fresco green, family owned from new, fsh, MoT to January 23, 2018. 4 almost new Goodyear tyres, towbar.

£595.

07968 520187.

VW BORA

04, one owner, 1.6 petrol, MoT, Service history, lovely condition.

£795

07508 664683.

BARGAIN

VW PASSAT 2.0

Petrol, 54 plate, 85,000 miles, only two owners, metallic blue, leather seats, fsh, long MoT.

£850.

07860 387015.

classic cars

PRESTIGE

ROLLS ROYCE SILVER SPIRIT

C plate, honey gold metallic, magnolia interior, same owner 15 years, MoT, needs a little TLC.

£5,250.

01543 325831.

commercial vehicles

FORD TRANSIT CONNECT T200

57 plate, MoT till March, 62,000 miles, 2 sets of keys, good, clean, condition.

£1,750 ono

01543 671436.

FORD TRANSIT recovery truck, T350, 61 reg, 10 ton winch, new back, MoT, £7,150. 07836 568903.

MUST BE SEEN

FORD TRANSIT DOUBLE CAB TIPPER T350

09 reg, 5 tonne ram.

11 months MoT.

Very good condition.

£4,650 ono.

Telephone 07836 568903.

scrap vehicles

OUR ADVERTISERS are reminded that it is an offence under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 to buy scrap cars/metal for cash.

ABC AUTO SALVAGE WANTED URGENT
Scrap & MOT Failures Best Prices Paid ELV Registered Spares Always Available
0121 557 0800 or 0121 557 0400. Oldbury Area.

vehicles wanted

CROWN MOTORS guarantee best price for your unwanted cars/vans. 07903 549849, buyer will call.

9 Local Information

public & legal notices

LEGAL / PUBLIC NOTICES
For convenience you may fax any advertising requirements to
Marie Hogg on 01902 713146 or email marie.hogg@expressandstar.co.uk
(remember to include a name/contact number for confirmation of receipt)

SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
Regeneration and Planning
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

I hereby give notice that Sandwell Council has received the following applications under the planning acts which it is required to give public notice for the reason given at the beginning of each group of applications.

This is a major application.

DC/17/60621	Mr Kappa Dulay Woodbourne Group	Former United Springs Limited New Swan Lane West Bromwich B70 0NT	Proposed demolition of existing industrial units, and erection of 17 No. apartments and 53 No. dwelling houses and associated works.

The proposed development may affect the setting of a Listed Building(s), and the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

DC/17/60709	Mrs Christine Bailey Sandwell MBC	Town Hall High Street West Bromwich B70 8DY	Proposed relocation of ladies toilets to create entrance lobby with sliding access doors and platform lift, and external access ramp.

The Council are of the opinion that the proposal may affect the setting of a listed building.

DC/17/60670	Mrs Christine Bailey Sandwell MBC	Town Hall High Street West Bromwich B70 8DY	Proposed installation of access door and associated access ramp.

Members of the public may inspect copies of these applications at Council House, Freeth Street, Oldbury, West Midlands, B69 3DE (between 8.00a.m. and 5.30p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 9.00a.m. and 5.30p.m. Wednesday and 8.00a.m. to 5p.m. Friday) or via the Council's Public Access website (www.sandwell.gov.uk).

Anyone who wishes to make representations about these applications can do so via the website, or should write to the Council at the above address within 21 days (and 21 days for Listed Building or Conservation Area consent) of the date of this advertisement quoting the application reference number.

MR NICK BUBALO, Director – Regeneration and Planning

highways england

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 – SECTION 14(1)(a), AND SECTION 27(1) OF SCHEDULE 9 AND SECTION 16(2) OF THE MOTORWAYS TRAFFIC (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 1982
THE M5 AND M6 MOTORWAYS (OLDBURY VIADUCT) (TEMPORARY RESTRICTION AND PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) (NO. 2) ORDER 2017

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Highways England Company Limited (Company No. 9346363) has revoked an existing Order and made a new Order on the M5 and M6 Motorways, in the Metropolitan Boroughs of Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall and the City of Birmingham, to enable repair works to be carried out to Oldbury Viaduct and to enable resurfacing, new lighting and gantry installation, upgrading of the road restraint system and maintenance works to be carried out.

The effect of the Order will be to, at different times, –

(1) impose –
- (a) a 50 miles per hour speed limit on –
  - (i) the southbound carriageway of the M5 from its junction with the link roads leading from the northbound and southbound carriageways of the M6, to a point 400 metres north of the centreline of the Penncricket Lane overbridge, south of Junction 2;
  - (ii) the northbound carriageway of the M5 from a point 1400 metres south of the centreline of the A458 Hagley Road West overbridge, north of Junction 3, to its junction with the link roads leading to the northbound and southbound carriageways of the M6;
  - (iii) any slip road leading to or from the M5 at Junction 1 and Junction 2;
  - (iv) the link roads leading to and from the northbound and southbound carriageways of the M5, to and from the northbound and southbound carriageways of the M6, at M6 Junction 8;
- (b) a 40 miles per hour speed limit on –
  - (i) the southbound carriageway of the M5 from its junction with the link roads leading from the northbound and southbound carriageways of the M6, to the centreline of Salters Lane overbridge, north of Junction 1;
  - (ii) the northbound carriageway of the M5 from a point 40 metres north of the centreline of the northern overbridge of the A41 roundabout at Junction 1, to its junction with the link roads leading to the northbound and southbound carriageways of the M6; and
  - (iii) the link roads described in (1)(a)(iv) above; and
- (c) a 30 miles per hour speed limit on –
  - (i) the southbound carriageway of the M5 from the centreline of Salters Lane overbridge, north of Junction 1, to a point 1200 metres north of the centreline of the Penncricket Lane overbridge, south of Junction 2;
  - (ii) the northbound carriageway of the M5 from the centreline of the Penncricket Lane overbridge, south of Junction 2, to a point 40 metres north of the centreline of the northern overbridge of the A41 roundabout at Junction 1;
  - (iii) the slip roads described in (1)(a)(iii) above;

(2) close –
- (a) the southbound carriageway of the M5 from its junction with the link road leading from the M6 (M6 Junction 8), to its junction with the entry slip road at Junction 1;
- (b) the southbound carriageway of the M5 from its junction with the exit slip road at Junction 1, to its junction with the entry slip road at Junction 2;
- (c) the southbound carriageway of the M5 from its junction with the exit slip road at Junction 2, to its junction with the entry slip road at Junction 3;
- (d) the northbound carriageway of the M5 from its junction with the exit slip road at Junction 3, to its junction with the entry slip road at Junction 2;
- (e) the northbound carriageway of the M5 from its junction with the exit slip road at Junction 2, to its junction with the entry slip road at Junction 1;
- (f) the northbound carriageway of the M5 from its junction with the exit slip road at Junction 1, to its junction with the link road leading to the M6 (M6 Junction 8);
- (g) the link roads leading from the northbound and southbound carriageways of the M6 at Junction 8 to the southbound carriageway of the M5; and
- (h) any slip road leading to or from the M5 at Junctions 1, 2 and 3;

(3) close various lanes of –
- (a) the southbound carriageway of the M5 from its junction with the exit slip at Junction 1, to its junction with the entry slip at Junction 2; and
- (b) the northbound carriageway of the M5 from its junction with the exit slip at Junction 2, to its junction with the entry slip at Junction 1;
  and allow vehicles to use the hardshoulder;

(4) close –
- (a) the southbound carriageway of the M5 from its junction with the exit slip at Junction 1, to its junction with the entry slip at Junction 2 and allow traffic to use lanes 3 and 4 of the northbound carriageway in a contraflow manner; and
- (b) the northbound carriageway of the M5 from its junction with the exit slip at Junction 2, to its junction with the entry slip at Junction 1 and allow traffic to use lanes 3 and 4 of the southbound carriageway in a contraflow manner.

The work started on Monday 22 May 2017, this phase of work is expected to continue for approximately 18 months. The Order will come into force on 24 June 2017 and have a maximum duration of 18 months.

Any vehicle being used for police, fire brigade or ambulance purposes will be exempt from the speed restriction and closures, but not the contraflow. Special forces vehicles will be exempt from the speed restrictions. Any vehicles being used in connection with the works or by a traffic officer, will be exempt from the closures, but not the contraflow.

Diversion routes using alternative junctions of the M5 and M6, via the A456 and A4123 and vice versa; via the A4123, A4034, A457 and A4252 and vice versa; via the A41, A4444, A436, A454 and vice versa; and via the A41, A4031, A4041 and A34 and vice versa, will be signed.

For further enquiries please contact Colin Jackson on 0300 470 3109.

Karen Eustace, an officer in Highways England Company Limited.

Highways England Company Limited (Company No. 9346363) registered office: Bridge House, Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, GU1 4LZ. A Company registered in England and Wales.

SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Borough Council of Sandwell (St Vincent's Crescent, West Bromwich) (Temporary Road Closures) Order 2017 has made an Order to temporarily prohibit vehicles from proceeding along St Vincent's Crescent, West Bromwich between Poultney Street and Dial Lane. Traffic will be diverted via Poultney Street, Dial Lane and vice-versa. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work necessitating a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order is expected to be completed by 21/07/17, effective from 26/06/17. Purpose – installation of foul and storm water connections by L Healy Ltd for Lovell Homes.

The Borough Council of Sandwell (Woods Lane, Cradley Heath) (Temporary Road Closure No.2) Order 2017, has made an Order to temporarily prohibit any vehicles from proceeding along Woods Lane, Cradley Heath at the point of its junction with Forge Lane. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work is expected to be completed by 11/07/17 effective from 03/07/17. Traffic will be diverted via Cradley Road, Chester Road and vice-versa. Purpose – reinforcement works to electricity cables by Western Power Distribution.

The Borough Council of Sandwell (Knotsall Lane, Oldbury) (Temporary Road Closure) Order 2017, has made an Order to temporarily prohibit any vehicles from proceeding along Knotsall Lane, Oldbury between Bristnall Hall Road and the southern bounday of 18 Knotsall Lane. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work is expected to be completed by 21/07/17 effective from 17/07/17. Traffic will be diverted via Moat Road, Bristnall Hall Road and vice-versa. Purpose – new electricity connection by Western Power Distribution.

The Borough Council of Sandwell (Southwell Walk, West Bromwich) (Temporary Road Closure) Order 2017, has made an Order to temporarily prohibit any vehicles from proceeding along Southwell Walk, West Bromwich between Charity Bick Way and Lyng Lane. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work is expected to be completed by 08/08/17 effective from 07/08/17. Traffic will be diverted via Lyng Lane, Lyttleton Street, Charity Bick Way and vice-versa. Purpose – installation of new duct by Comex 2000 for Virgin Media.

The Borough Council of Sandwell (Vicarage Road, Smethwick) (Temporary Road Closure) Order 2017, has made an Order to temporarily prohibit any vehicles from proceeding along Vicarage Road, Smethwick between Church Hill Street and the eastern bounday of 41 Vicarage Road. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work is expected to be completed by 08/09/17 effective from 07/08/17. Traffic will be diverted via Green Street, South Road, Church Hill Street and vice-versa. Purpose – gas mains renewal scheme by Cadent Gas Ltd.

SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Borough Council of Sandwell (Mafeking Road, Smethwick) (Temporary Road Closure) Order 2017 intends to temporarily prohibit vehicles from proceeding along Mafeking Road, Smethwick. Traffic will be diverted via Lewisham Road, Brasshouse Lane, Kimberley Road and vice-versa. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work necessitating a temporary traffic regulation order is expected to be completed by 14/08/17, effective from 03/07/17. Purpose – to facilitate new storm and foul water connections to a Countrside Properties development by M Lambe Construction Ltd.

The Borough Council of Sandwell (New Road/Mount Street, Tipton) (Temporary Prohibition of Turning) Order 2017 intends to temporarily prohibit vehicles from turning left into Mount Street off New Road, Tipton.Traffic will be diverted via Toll End Road, Bridge Road and Horseley Road. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work necessitating a temporary traffic regulation order is expected to be completed by 12/07/17, effective from 10/07/17. Purpose – to facilitate repairs to a leaking water main by South Staffs Water.

The Borough Council of Sandwell (Vicarage Road, West Bromwich) (Temporary Road Closure) Order 2017 intends to temporarily prohibit vehicles from proceeding along Vicarage Road, West Bromwich from its junction with Arlington Road (including the junction itself) to its junction with Heath Lane Traffic will be diverted via Heath Lane, Clarkes Lane, Jowetts Lane, Witton Lane, Hill Top, Black Lake, Church Lane and vice-versa and via Walsall Road, Lyndhurst Road, All Saints Way and Wilford Road for traffic wishing to travel south along Vicarage Road and via Wilford Road, All Saints Way and Heath Lane for traffic wishing to travel north along Vicarage Road. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work necessitating a temporary traffic regulation order is expected to be completed by 07/08/17, effective from 17/07/17. Purpose – to facilitate works to a gas main by Balfour Beatty on behalf of Cadent Gas Ltd.

MARY SUSAN LESLEY WRAGG (otherwise Susan Lesley Paton, Susan Lesley Wragg) (Deceased)

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the above named, late of 6 OLD CHAPEL ROAD, SMETHWICK B67 6JA, who died on 02/04/2017, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 23/08/2017, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

Andrew Paton, The London Gazette (3814), PO Box 3584, Norwich NR7 7WD.

NELLIE GREEN (Deceased)

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the aforementioned deceased, late of 6 Poplar Road Wednesbury WS10 9PY, who died on 28/10/2012, are required to send particulars thereof in writing to the undersigned Solicitors on or before 01/09/2017, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to claims and interests of which they have had notice.
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Sandwell Chronicle Thursday, June 22, 2017

Good deals but only until the end of June

All-new Swift has summer finance and loyalty offers

By Sharon Walters

The all-new Swift is now on sale and Suzuki is pleased to announce the availability of its attractive PCP finance offers.

Personal Contract Purchase is an ideal way for customers to take delivery of a new Suzuki with a very low deposit and low monthly payments too.

Suzuki Financial Services is also offering a £500 deposit allowance with 2.9 per cent APR finance on SZ-T and SZ5 two wheel drive models until the end of June.

Taking an SZ-T with 1.0 Boosterjet engine as an example with the £500 deposit allowance on offer, no further deposit is required and payments are then spread over 48 months at £185 per month with an APR of just 2.9 per cent.

Monthly payments can be lowered to £159 per month for the SZ-T if a small deposit of £1,163 is made. As with any PCP agreement, an optional final payment is required to keep the car which for this model is £4,645.

Moving to the top of the range SZ5 1.0-litre Boosterjet 2WD with the £500 deposit allowance, just £1,305 is all that is needed as a customer deposit followed by 48 monthly payments of £179 and an APR of 2.9 per cent. The optional final payment for this model is £5,153.

Suzuki's new Swift is a pretty looker

For even greater fuel efficiency, the SZ5 2WD with manual transmission is equipped as standard with SHVS (Smart Hybrid Vehicle by Suzuki). In situations that require higher fuel use, such as when starting from a standstill or accelerating, SHVS helps suppress fuel consumption by providing electric motor assist using electricity generated through regenerative braking. Because the system uses a belt drive rather than a conventional starter motor to restart the engine after an engine stop it allows for a quiet and smooth start.

The six speed automatic transmission equipped SZ5 is also included in the low rate and deposit allowance offers with a customer deposit of £1,543 required followed by 48 monthly payments of £199 .

Suzuki has introduced a new and comprehensive Accessories programme to enable customers to fully personalise their new Swift. As an introductory offer Suzuki will contribute £500 towards these to all existing Suzuki car owners. The only stipulation is that customers must have had a Suzuki car in the same household for at least 90 days and the accessories are ordered at point of purchase.

Standard equipment for all Swift models in the range is comprehensive and the SZ3 model with 1.2-litre Dualjet engine and manual transmission includes six airbags, air conditioning, leather steering wheel, DAB radio with Bluetooth and four speakers, rear privacy glass, LED daytime running lights, 15-inch wheels, body coloured door mirrors and front electric windows.

Pricing:

1.2-litre SZ3 Dualjet – manual transmission, £10,999

1.0-litre SZ-T Boosterjet – manual transmission, £12,999

1.0-litre SZ5 Boosterjet SHVS – manual transmission, £14,499

1.0-litre SZ5 Boosterjet – automatic transmission, £15,849

1.2-litre SZ5 SHVS ALLGRIP – manual transmission, £15,499

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14	Peugeot 3008 1.6 e-HDi Active EGC Grey Only 8000 Miles	£9,695	£9,795
14	Vauxhall Astra Sports Tourer 2.0 CDTi Elite Auto Brown 8000 Miles	£8,795	£8,995
15	Nissan Pulsar Diesel 1.5 dCi Acenta Red Only 8000 Miles	£9,295	£9,695
64	Nissan Micra 1.2 Acenta 5dr CVT Green Only 8000 Miles	£6,795	£6,995
15	Citroen C1 Hatchback 1.0 VTi Flair ETG Grey Only 9000 Miles	£7,795	£7,995
63	Ford B-max Diesel 1.5 TDCi Zetec Silver Only 10000 Miles	£8,295	£8,495
63	Ford Focus Diesel 1.6 TDCi 115 Zetec Red Only 11000 Miles	£8,695	£8,995
14	Hyundai I20 Hatchback 1.2 Active Silver Only 12000 Miles	£6,795	£6,995

Citroen			
14	Citroen C3 1.6 e-HDi Air Exclusive ETG6 Red 16k	£7,795	£7,995
12	Citroen C3 Picasso Diesel Estate 1.6 HDi 8V VTR+ Grey 30k	£6,195	£6,295
14	Citroen C4 Picasso 1.6 e-HDi 115 Airdream VTR+ Silver 17k	£9,295	£9,495
14	Citroen C4 Picasso 1.6 e-HDi 115 Exclusive+ Red 62k	£9,295	£9,495
11	Citroen C4 Picasso Diesel 1.6 HDi VTR+ Silver 45k	£6,995	£7,295
06	Citroen C6 2.7 HDi V6 Exclusive 4dr Auto White 79k	£9,795	£9,995
57	Citroen C6 2.7 HDi V6 Lignage 4dr Auto Silver 62k	£7,295	£7,495
57	Citroen C6 Diesel Saloon 2.7 HDi V6 Lignage 4dr Auto Black	£7,495	£7,695
14	Citroen Gr C4 Picasso 1.6 e-HDi 115 Air Exclusive+ ETG6 Blue 21k	£13,295	£13,495
14	Citroen Grand C4 Picasso 2.0 BlueHDi Exclusive+ Red 40k	£12,295	£12,495
Ford			
15	Ford B-max Hatchback 1.6 Zetec Powershift Blue 16k	£8,795	£8,995
13	Ford C-max Diesel Estate 1.6 TDCi Zetec Blue 33k	£7,795	£7,995
63	Ford Fiesta Hatchback 1.0 EcoBoost Zetec Black 27K	£7,795	£7,995
63	Ford Fiesta Hatchback 1.0 EcoBoost Zetec Blue 19k	£8,195	£8,295
13	Ford Fiesta Hatchback 1.6 Zetec Powershift Black 22k	£7,795	£7,995
64	Ford Focus 1.6 TDCi 115 Zetec Navigator White 29k	£9,295	£9,795
09	Ford Focus 1.6 TDCi Zetec Silver 84k	£2,995	£3,295
63	Ford Focus Diesel 1.6 TDCi 115 Zetec Black 32k	£7,995	£8,295
61	Ford Focus Diesel 1.6 TDCi 115 Zetec Blue 31k	£7,295	£7,495
13	Ford Focus Hatchback 1.6 Zetec 5dr White 13k	£8,695	£8,795
Nissan			
61	Nissan Juke Hatchback 1.6 Acenta 5dr CVT Black 33K	£7,795	£7,995
63	Nissan Juke Hatchback 1.6 Acenta White 23k	£8,495	£8,795
14	Nissan Note 1.2 DiG-S Acenta Premium Blue 50k	£6,795	£6,995
14	Nissan Note 1.5 dCi Acenta Premium 5dr Blue 27k	£7,295	£7,695
63	Nissan Note 1.5 dCi Acenta Premium 5dr Grey 31k	£6,995	£7,495
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14	Nissan Qashqai 1.5 dCi Acenta Premium Blue 24k	£13,495	£13,795
14	Nissan Qashqai Diesel 1.5 dCi Acenta Premium White 17k	£14,495	£14,695
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63	Peugeot 2008 1.6 e-HDi Active EGC Brown 21k	£7,795	£7,995
63	Peugeot 208 Hatchback 1.6 VTi Allure Auto Grey 40k	£6,795	£6,995
14	Peugeot 3008 Diesel Estate 1.6 e-HDi Allure EGC Grey 19k	£10,795	£10,995
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14	Vauxhall Meriva 1.6 CDTi 16V eco Exclusiv Blue 19k	£7,295	£7,495
62	Vauxhall Meriva Estate 1.4i 16V SE Grey 23k	£6,295	£6,495
65	Vauxhall Mokka Diesel 1.6 CDTi ecoFLEX SE Black 22k	£12,295	£12,495
14	Vauxhall Mokka Hatchback 1.6i SE Blue 21k	£10,295	£10,495
63	Vauxhall Zafira 1.7 CDTi ecoFLEX Exclusiv [110] Grey 23k	£7,795	£7,995
60	Vauxhall Zafira 1.7 CDTi ecoFLEX Exclusiv [110] Silver 44k	£5,795	£5,995
08	Vauxhall Zafira 1.9 CDTi Exclusiv [120] Auto Blue 73k		£2,995
14	Vauxhall Zafira Estate 1.8i Exclusiv Brown 16k	£7,295	£7,495
Others			
62	Chevrolet Orlando Estate 1.8 LT Red 38k	£6,795	£6,995
10	Honda Civic Hatchback 1.8 i-VTEC Si Red 69k	£4,695	£4,995
57	Honda Jazz Hatchback 1.4 i-DSi SE 5dr Black 73k	£2,695	£2,995
64	Kia Sportage Diesel Estate 2.0 CRDi KX-2 Blue 18k	£14,495	£14,995
14	Mini Countryman Diesel 2.0 Cooper S D Bronze 20k	£11,795	£11,995
14	Renault Clio 1.5 dCi 90 Dynamique S MediaNav Energy Red 21k	£8,495	£8,795
14	Skoda Yeti Outdoor Estate 1.2 TSI SE White 27k	£10,795	£10,995
07	Suzuki Swift Hatchback 1.5 GLX 5dr Blue 81k	£2,495	£2,795
11	Toyota Yaris 1.33 VVT-i T Spirit Nav Silver 87k	£3,195	£3,495
13	Volkswagen Golf Diesel Hatchback 1.6 TDI 105 SE Blue 16k	£10,495	£10,995
08	Volkswagen Touran 1.9 TDI S 90 Grey 87k	£4,795	£5,495

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Warwickshire's Chris Woakes at a photocall at Edgbaston

Ben Stokes and Chris Woakes celebrate victory in a one-day international against Bangladesh

Woakes before the Champions Trophy game against Bangladesh

England's Chris Woakes celebrates his dismissal of Mohammad Amir

This humble all-rounder is realising his potential

HIS Champions Trophy campaign may have ended just three overs into the tournament, but Great Barr's Chris Woakes is still hoping to make an impact on the game this summer.

The all-rounder told of his frustration after being ruled out of the one-day tournament – won by Pakistan at the weekend – early in the first game against Bangladesh after suffering a side strain.

He faces a race against time to be fit for the first of this summer's Test matches against South Africa on July 6.

However, the humble 28-year-old is still determined to have a big say.

"Hopefully I can be a part of the majority of it, if not all of it," he said. "There are some really important Test matches to come.

"These are exciting times."

According to those who know him best, the all-rounder was stunned almost into silence upon learning he had been bought by the Kolkata Knight Riders in the Indian Premier League auction for a figure just shy of half a million pounds.

Modest

Compared to the £1.7million spent on England team-mate Ben Stokes by the wonderfully-monikered Rising Pune Supergiants, it appears a rather modest amount.

Not that it bothers Woakes in the slightest, allowing him as it does the opportunity to write the next chapter in a career which has in the past 12 months begun to hit the heights long anticipated.

That Woakes was a cricketer of considerable potential was evident from the moment he broke through the ranks at Warwickshire, topping the county's bowling averages in 2008 at the age of just 19.

International call-ups inevitably followed, first as part of the limited overs set-up and then, in 2013, at Test level.

But as has been the case with so many others who shone in the county game, finding his feet in the international arena took time.

Even as late as this time last year, it remained unclear whether his potential would ever be fulfilled. Those questions have now been emphatically answered. "It was a breakthrough year," admits Woakes.

"I'd had a tricky time of it in South Africa during the winter of 2015, when things did not go as well as I would have liked. I got back to Warwickshire and just hit the ground running."

That last sentence belongs firmly in understatement category.

An injury to Stokes opened the door for Woakes and he headed to the second Test from Sri Lanka last May fresh from taking career best figures of 9-36 in a County Championship game with Durham.

Five wickets followed as England romped home to victory. What had proven so tough before suddenly came naturally and Woakes has never looked back.

"It almost snowballed out of control really," he laughs. It's the sort of form you want to bottle and take everywhere with you.

"There are always going to be ups and downs but last summer was an up. I think my game has matured. The more you are exposed to international cricket, the more you adapt.

"There are very few who go into it and boss it from day one. Having those tasters, in and out, was definitely good for me.

"I feel like my game has improved to the stage when I can perform at that level. I am more confident. I have a belief in myself that I am good enough to do it." That belief was tested in India as Woakes tasted the IPL phenomenon for the first time. Eoin Morgan, England's limited overs captain, provided a useful source of advice.

"I tapped up Eoin Morgan, who has been there for many years," says Woakes. "I think he has done four or five tournaments.

"I asked him what to expect, pick his brains about how to go about it. I think every team, every franchise, does things a little differently.

"It is one of those experiences that until you get out there and put yourself in the pressure environment, you don't know how you are going to handle it."

The success of Twenty20 is threatening to change the shape of cricket forever and everyone has an opinion on the ECB's plans to introduce a similar style tournament to IPL to the English game.

It is, as Warwickshire sporting director Ashley Giles so accurately observed, 'cricket's Brexit'.

You can place Woakes firmly in the 'in favour but with some reservations' camp.

Concept

"We have seen how well it has worked in India and Australia and it's important we get more faces into the sport," he said.

"More kids playing the game and enjoying cricket. I think it is a great idea and a great concept.

"Although it is not going to happen until 2020, it needs to happen in this country. The game is constantly evolving and you need to keep improving it and making it attractive to the public.

"They don't want to keep paying for the same thing. It is important we don't want to stand still.

"At the same time you don't want to lose the interest in Test cricket and it just to become a T20 sport. The traditions of the game are very important."

Those Test traditions will be firmly in the spotlight later this year when England head to Australia for The Ashes.

The latest instalment of one of sport's greatest rivalries will come after a close to relentless summer which includes a series against South Africa, when Joe Root will make his debut as captain. A series against the West Indies will follow.

SPORTING MEMORIES

By Matt Maher

"There are always going to be ups and downs but last summer was an up. I think my game has matured. The more that you are exposed to international cricket, the more you adapt"

Genting Arena date for Globetrotters tour

THE world famous Harlem Globetrotters bring their spectacular show to the Genting Arena, Birmingham as part of their 2018 world tour.

They will be in Birmingham on Friday, May 18 as they enter their 93rd season of entertaining fans.

Proving once again to be a busy year for the Globetrotters the current 2017 World Tour sees them play in over 250 North American markets and 30 countries worldwide.

Only one year after setting seven official Guinness World Records titles, the Globetrotters broke a single-day total of nine records in 2016, including the longest basketball hook shot, longest basketball shot blindfolded, most basketball three-pointers made by a pair in one minute, and longest blindfolded basketball hook-shot.

During their 2018 World Tour, the famed team will feature a star-studded roster that includes Big Easy Lofton, Ant Atkinson, Hi-Lite Bruton, Thunder Law, Bull Bullard and Cheese Chisholm – plus female stars TNT Lister and Ace Jackson.

Tickets for the Genting Arena date have gone on general sale from from www.theticketfactory.com or by calling 0844 33 88 222.

Second City slickers have rivals on ropes

BCB Promotions return to Birmingham next month with their five-fight Professional Boxing Dinner Show – Second City Slickers.

Former WBC International Super Bantamweight Champion and English Super Bantamweight king Sean Davis is back in action on the July 22 card.

'Showtime' lost his WBC strap to Gamal Yafai in a hotly-anticipated local derby at the Barclaycard Arena last month.

The 27-year-old Brummie will be looking to finish the season on a high as he looks to go again next term.

Undefeated Birmingham super welterweight Jordan Clayton (6-0) also features. The 23-year-old defeated Nick Golubs last time out on the same show at the Barclaycard Arena.

Having secured an International Challenge belt, Clayton has his eyes on a British strap this time around.

Joining Davis and Clayton are a trio of debutants – all from Birmingham. Super welterweight Ashley Silver, cruiserweight Matt Sen, and heavyweight Nathan Stevens all feature.

Tickets are £65 VIP to include a two-course meal or £35 standard, unreserved seating. Call 07964 984 445.

Tai thanks fans for support after burglary

WOLVERHAMPTON speedway ace Tai Woffinden has thanked all his fans who have rallied round he and his wife Faye after they were burgled.

The burglary took place at their new home near East Midlands Airport when Woffinden was racing in the Mitas Czech Republic FIM Speedway Grand Prix in Prague. Pregnant Faye was at her parents' home watching on TV. Woffinden estimates £20,000 worth of personal belongings were taken – and it could have been worse. "Personally I think they were disturbed when Faye got home," he said. "It's naturally a horrible time, particularly for Faye when I'm away racing. I was so angry when I was told about it. Thanks to all the fans who have sent messages of support through social media, once again they have proved how special they are."

Woffinden, who won the Elite League with Wolves last year and remains an asset of the Monmore Green outfit, managed to put the raid to the back of his mind as he continued his fine league form.

The day after the burglary – he scored 13 from five races in Worclaw's 51-39 Polish League win over Leszno. Three days later he carded 11+1 from five in the Swedish League as Masarna beat Piraterna 54-36.

Sport

Big Test ahead as Woakes begins to realise potential

Page 39

Departure is blow for the Brummies

BIRMINGHAM have suffered yet another major setback after captain Darryl Ritchings informed the club of his decision to quit the sport. The club have snapped up David Mason as a replacement – subject to BSPA approval.

Ritchings' decison is the latest in a long line of misfortunes for the Surestop Brummies who have already lost Chris Hay to retirement, Danyon Hume and Kean Dicken to injury and were recently without No.1 Jack Parkinson-Blackburn who was slapped with a period of inactivity by the sport's governing body. He was returning as captain for last night's (Wednesday) fixture against Lakeside at Perry Barr.

With reserve Kyle Roberts also nursing an injury and Liam Carr racing through the pain barrier too, Ritchings' news couldn't have been timed much worse from a Birmingham point of view.

Team boss Graham Drury said: "He told me that he was pulling the plug on speedway and that he'd fallen out of love with the sport.

His mind is made up and all we can do is respect his decision, wish him all the best and of course we hope to see him back on a bike one day in the future if the timing feels right for him."

Ritchings says his decision was made with a heavy heart and has thanked everyone connected with the club for their support over the last 18 months.

The 40-year-old Mason was set to slot into the main body of the team and make his debut against Lakeside - the club who sacked him last month. Not only will Mason come in as a rider, but team boss Graham Drury has also appointed him as Development Coach as well.

"David's name stood out by a country mile when I sat down to study the options and despite his age, we're thrilled to welcome him to Birmingham," said Drury.

Back to winning ways with success that's Wight wash

BIRMINGHAM roared back to winning ways with an impressive 53-37 away victory over the Isle of Wight.

The patched-up Surestop Brummies bounced back from Monday's bruising defeat at Kent to leave Smallbrook with four Travel Plus National League points.

It was an excellent showing from the Perry Barr outfit as they delivered eight race wins and ran just four last places.

And team boss Graham Drury declared himself proud of the effort shown by his depleted side.

Liam Carr battled through the pain barrier to bag an outstanding 15-point haul whilst guesting No.1 Zach Wajtknecht and Tom Bacon also impressed.

Layne Cupitt earned a well-deserved heat 15 appearance after notching a vital score, whilst Macauley Leek and Alex Spooner, guesting for the injured Kyle Roberts, made important contributions in the lower order.

ISLE OF WIGHT 37: Connor Coles 11, James Cockle 10, Ben Wilson 6, Chris Widman 4+1, Kelsey Dugard 4, Jamie Sealey 2, Tyler Govier DNR.

BIRMINGHAM 53: Liam Carr 15, Tom Bacon 11+1, Zach Wajtknecht 10+1, Layne Cupitt 8+3, Alex Spooner 6+2, Macauley Leek 3+1, Darryl Ritchings r/r.

Boxer left in a Stew over name change

Boxing

TIVIDALE'S Ryan 'Stewart' Davies wants fight fans to remember his name ahead of his next ring date at Walsall Town Hall – as he's had to change it!

Davies steps through the ropes for his second boxing contest on Friday, July 7 after impressing on his debut.

He features on Errol Johnson's BCB Promotions' show, titled 'Made in the Black Country.'

He's been registered as 'Stewart Davies', using his middle name as his first name under instructions from the British Boxing Board of Control.

There's already two other Ryan Davies's boxing professionally, the second having to change to an alias of 'RP Davies' to avoid confusion. That left the Black Country's Davies having to use Stewart.

Davies said: "You can't licence more than one name with the board, I'll try and get it changed again if I can but there might not be much I can do. My dad is happy, it's his first name! Even if I win on the night, the announcer will have to call me Stewart Davies. It's just one of those things."

The 24-year-old made his bow in the welterweight division at Birmingham's the Venue on April 29 , putting down and outpointing Andrej Cepur over four rounds. A short right hand dumped the Lithuanian on the canvas in the second, but Davies had to settle for a 40-35 decision with a 10-8 round for the knockdown.

He's taken a short holiday since then to the Greek island of Kos with partner Charlie, who enjoyed lounging by the pool as he kept up with his runs.

The former kickboxer remains involved in his former calling, too, and still works as an instructor at Oldbury's School of Black Belts.

Tickets are on sale priced at £35 and £60 ringside, call 0845 111 2900.

£25m PRICE ON ALBION'S EVANS

ALBION are insisting star defender Jonny Evans is not for sale amid reports Leicester City are readying a second bid.

The club have already rejected a £10million bid from the Foxes, which was seen as a derisory offer in the corridors of power at The Hawthorns.

Jonny Evans

But Leicester, who signed Harry Maguire from Hull City for £17m last week, still want another centre-half to bolster their backline.

The Foxes remain keen on Evans, but sources at Albion say they would only entertain bids north of £25m, and only once another defender was bought. Evans' team-mates don't expect him to be going anywhere. Gareth McAuley, his centre-back partner for Albion and Northern Ireland, said: "Jonny's been linked but I don't think they will sell – they will be looking to build a team around him."

The Baggies only have four senior defenders at the moment, and would need to buy two centre-backs if Evans followed former Manchester United team-mate Darren Fletcher out of the door.

Tony Pulis is still keen on former Chelsea captain John Terry, and sees the 36-year-old as a potential replacement for Fletcher in the dressing room.

Talks are ongoing, although Terry has a number of options, including offers from Birmingham City, Villa and Bournemouth, and it is not yet clear what the defender wants to do.

Pulis is also keeping an eye on Ryan Shawcross's ongoing contract negotiations at Stoke City. Shawcross, who was made Potters captain by Pulis, has one year left on his current deal, although he's now been offered a new contract. Stoke chief executive Tony Scholes confirmed: "When you've got important players, you want to do something sooner rather than later."

Albion have announced they will kick-start their pre-season schedule with a match against Czech champions Slavia Prague on Wednesday, July 12.

Let me entertain you – Konta

Italian Camila Giorgi seen during Monday's play at Edgbaston Priory, where she won her match

BRITISH No.1 Johanna Konta was well on target for success at this year's Aegon Classic in Birmingham, despite a second set wobble against Ukrainian Lesia Tsurenko, she was hoping to put on a show for the crowds.

Konta relishes playing in front of packed courts and is keenly aware that tennis is in the entertainment industry as she looked to shake of the disappointment of losing in the final at Nottingham.

And she is looking for more court time to get used to the challenges of playing on grass.

"Most people try and get as much time as possible on the surface heading into Wimbledon," said the 26-year-old.

"It's a short season, so I'm just looking to play as many matches on the grass and look to adapt well heading into the Wimbledon battle."

And she is hoping to have a big crowd at the Edgbaston Priory Club.

"I love playing in front of people. Whether the crowd is for me or against me, I think most importantly we are entertainers," she added.

"People pay to come watch us perform and give them hopefully a good match. So that's always a nice feeling."

Meanwhile, fellow Brit Heather Watson exited the tournament at the first hurdle. The wildcard entry lost 2-6, 7-5, 3-6 to Ukrainian Elina Svitolina in the first round yesterday.

Walsall hit 32 in day they must forget

IT was well and truly a day to forget for Walsall as they were all out for just 32 in their Premier Division clash at Shrewsbury.

No batter managed to register double figures for them at London Road as their innings came to an end in the 21st over.

James Middleton and Billy-J Cox – both six – were their top scorers.

Both Dannyjo Cox and Sivakumar Duwarapu were out for ducks.

The hosts, top of the table, made short work of getting the win, ending 33-1 in the fifth over – Paul Byrne getting Walsall's wicket.

They are seventh after the loss.

One place above are West Bromwich Dartmouth, who lost by five wickets against Ombersley.

Dartmouth made a bad start to their innings as skipper and opener Kadeer Ali went out for six.

Liam Banks and Shozair Ali bludgeoned 58 and 76 respectively though to end 285-6 after the full 55 overs.

It was a respectable total, but some steady batting from Ombersley saw them just about clinch the win.

They reached their target with only two balls to spare, largely thanks to Nicolas Hammond's impressive 83 from 74 balls.

Matthew Kleinveldt smashed a ton as Wolverhampton got a winning draw against Barnt Green. He got 142, including 19 boundaries, to help them finish 315-5. Barnt Green ended up 282-7 in response.

Kidderminster remain in the bottom two after losing by four wickets at Knowle & Dorridge, despite opener Craig Wood managing a stunning 160 runs. That, and skipper Neil Pinner's 75, helped build a 317-5 total, but Knowle & Dorridge surpassed it with just one ball to spare.

Link to victory for 70-mile Ironman

Black Country Triathletes took on the local Ironman 70.3 triathlon at Shugborough Hall this weekend in blistering temperatures which involved a 1.2 mile swim at Chasewater, a 56 mile bike round Lichfield, Burton Upon Trent and Cannock Chase, followed by a 13.1 mile run around Shugborough Estate.

Jon Link was first home for the club in a time of 5:14:42 followed by Paul Gamston in 5:43:34, Richard Hancher in 5:48:31, Tim Blewitt in 5:53:57, Cheryl Blewitt in 5:57:10 who finished eighth in age category, Matt Price in 6:10:35 and Pat Hackett who finished in 6:46:44 and seventh in category.

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